SOWING AND WAITING

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A

CHOICE IN THE GATHERING

OR

SOWING AND WAITING

BY

S. M. BURNHAM

AUTHOR OF "BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES," "LIMESTONES AND MARBLES,"
"A ROMAN STORY," ETC.

BOSTON

A. I. BRADLEY & COMPANY

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INTRODUCTION.

PLAN AND OBJECT OF THE STORY.

THE following story is intended to illustrate the duty of parents in training their children and exercising a happy and judicious influence at home.

Paulina Howard, whose husband dies in the beginning of the narrative, is left with three young children to educate which she considers her work in life, and she conscientiously prepares herself for her duties. She attends personally to their education, with a few other pupils. Her healthful influence is also seen in the development of the mind and character of her young sister, a happy, thoughtless girl just from school, who comes to spend a few months at Glen Cottage, the home of Mrs. Howard. During this visit the sister, whose name is Fanny Sherwood, becomes acquainted with Clive Layton, a college student, who teaches the winter school in the town of Jefferson, when they become acquainted and their friendship eventually ends in marriage.

Alice Bradford, the orphan niece of Doctor Clive and distant relative of Layton, was his early play mate, and a strong friendship existed between them.

With Alice, this friendship ended in an ardent

affection, and when her friend became engaged to Fanny Sherwood she became conscious of the nature of her attachment to Clive. Her struggles to overcome it revealed traits in her character hitherto concealed. She finally triumphed, and her experience prepared her for usefulness during her short career and a peaceful, happy death. Her influence over Paul Crawford leads him to renounce a worldly, aimless life, and after the death of Alice he devoted his life to the work of rescuing the outcasts and relieving the poor, so that Alice, after "sowing," waits in Heaven for the harvest.

Doctor Clive fills an important place, while the Waltons are representatives of many thrifty New England families whose well-governed households were known in country towns half a century ago. The Pages and the McClures have also their representatives. The other characters are introduced to make the narrative complete, though they have their representatives in real life.

"Marvellous" Chapin affords a relief to the feelings after the tragical death of Howard, while the episode of "Millie" illustrates the charity and sympathy of Alice.

Most of the scenes, and many of the characters, are taken from real life and known many years ago.

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS.

HARVEY HOWARD.
PAULINA HOWARD, *his wife.*
ANNA HOWARD, } *their*
LILLIE HOWARD, } *children.*
WILLIE HOWARD, }
DANIEL WALTON.
JANE WALTON, "Aunt Jenny."
JOHN WALTON, } *their*
HENRY WALTON, } *sons.*
ARTHUR WALTON, }
CLIVE LAYTON.
FANNY SHERWOOD.
DOCTOR CLIVE.
MR MERILL.
AMBROSE MERILL.
"MARVELLOUS" CHAPIN.
PRUDY CHAPIN.
REV. MR. GOODELL.

MRS. GOODELL.
DEACON HAYFORD.
MILLIE HAYFORD.
THE CUTLERS.
THE MCCLURES.
ALICE BRADFORD.
THE ALLENS.
THE PAGES.
THOMAS SHERWOOD.
THE WHITEMANS.
"ROCK" WHITE.
DAN WOODARD.
ANISE WOODARD.
HIRAM PARKER.
JOE ROCKWAY.
"THE MARQUIS."
UNCLE JIM.
CURLY JACK.

A few Others.

A CHOICE IN THE GATHERING.

CHAPTER I.

GLEN COTTAGE.

" 'T were well, thought I, if often
To rugged farm life came the gift
To harmonize and soften;
If more and more we found the troth
Of *fact* and *fancy* plighted,
And culture's charm and labor's strength
In rural homes united."

WITHIN a semicircular enclosure of hills, with high mountains in the rear, lay the well-tilled farm of Harvey Howard, with its sunny cottage, barn, shed, and other buildings securely sheltered by mountain ridges on the west and north and a forest of pines on the east, leaving the south open to the genial rays of the sun. Several years before our story begins, the young farmer had brought his family, consisting of a wife and infant daughter, from a large and cherished circle of friends in a neighboring State, to this wild mountain region. Only a few trees had been cut away, making a small clearing around his log cabin,

when he introduced his young wife to her future home.

Sorrowful indeed were the farewells of her friends, to the affectionate heart of Paulina Howard, but the solitude of her wilderness home almost crushed her spirits. Yet, with all her gentleness and affection, she possessed firmness and courage; therefore, after severe struggles with her own heart, she considerately assumed a cheerfulness that eventually resulted in genuine contentment.

By his energy, perseverance, and industry, Harvey Howard soon wrought a wonderful change in his wild retreat. Trees were cut away, the land brought under cultivation, a new barn was built and various other improvements were made the first year, and in the course of two years more a neat cottage had taken the place of the log cabin. Every undertaking had been prosperous, so at the end of five years the Howard farm was in fine condition. By industry and frugality the young couple had managed to save something every year towards paying for their farm, and in a few more years they hoped to be free from all encumbrances. Mrs. Howard had employed all her leisure moments in embellishing their dwelling, which she named Glen Cottage, by planting shrubbery and flowers about it, so that it was indeed like a garden in the wilderness. Two other children were added to the family circle, a son and a daughter.

On the day in which this narrative begins, light,

fleecy clouds had been flitting about until late in the afternoon, when they concentrated their forces in the northwest, where they lay along the horizon, without coming quite to its verge, a heavy mass like the slumbering forces of a vast army waiting for a furious onset.

The weather for several days previous had been intensely cold, but within twenty-four hours it gradually became milder, with a chill that portends a snow-storm. The sun, which had risen in unclouded splendor, foreshadowing pleasant weather, soon concealed its glory behind a hazy curtain, and was seen no more that day, save for a few moments, when it seemed to fall behind the dense cloud in the west, and sink below out of sight, reflecting its golden rays on the floating vapor lying above, which grew fainter every moment, until no traces of the magic scene were visible. The thick cloud became more threatening and descended quite to the horizon, completely hiding the sky from sight. The darkness increased, while the forms of the hills and mountains could not be traced, and the whole scene appeared enveloped in a mournful pall.

"I think we shall have a severe snow-storm," said Mr. Howard to his wife, as he placed a thick log of maple on a blazing fire in the kitchen.

"I should think so from the appearance of the heavens at sunset," replied Mrs. Howard. "The heavy cloud in the west looked much like it. I

noticed it hung on the top of Mt. Bald Eagle like a harbinger of evil. I could not help feeling melancholy as the sun disappeared, reflecting, for a moment, his glory, and then withdrawing it. So it is with many of our fond hopes; they dazzle for a time, and then sink forever, leaving our hearts enveloped in the cloud of disappointment."

"I suppose you mean in plain English," said her husband gaily, "that we shall have a pretty severe snow-storm. Your lively fancy seems unfavorable to your spirits. Is there anything in a storm to excite our fears? We surely have had pretty good opportunities of making their acquaintance since we came to this region."

"O you literal, prosy fellow," rejoined his wife, attempting to be gay; "you can see nothing in the phenomena of nature but what has a relation to profit and loss. The seasons with their varied beauties, showers, clouds, and sunshine, and other natural changes, are only regarded in the light of blessings or calamities as affecting the harvest."

"What a wise Providence that we have been brought together, my dear. You, without me, would have clothed yourself with clouds and moonshine, and have lived upon dew-drops, while I, without your imagination, should have found my home cheerless enough. But I must go to the village to-morrow, snow or no snow, for I have business to transact which admits of no delay."

"What may your business be, which admits of no "ifs and ands'?" inquired his wife.

"My dear little Eve, wives should not pry into their husbands' business affairs," said Harvey, gently touching her lips.

"You will not think of going if it should storm severely, would you, husband?" inquired his wife, with an effort to be cheerful, though feeling unusually dejected. That she should feel depressed at an event which not unfrequently happened surprised Paulina Howard herself, and she determined to subdue her fears, which she considered childish and needless, by changing the conversation. "Harvey," said she, "tea has been ready this half hour, and with your permission we will have our supper."

Mr. Howard, his wife, Anna, the eldest child of seven or eight years, Lillie, a mischievous little sprite of three summers, and Willie, the pet of the family, a young monarch of six months, who nevertheless ruled the household with absolute sway, constituted the family of Glen Cottage. The father, mother, and Anna, were seated at the table, while Lillie, not having reached the proper age for such honor, was placed in her little arm-chair before the fire, with her basin of bread and milk, a kind of food her mother regarded as best adapted to very young children.

"O mother," said Anna, "see what Lillie is doing to baby." The mother looked towards the cradle beside which Lillie was kneeling with her basin, for

the purpose of feeding her brother, but the contents of her spoon, which disappeared with surprising rapidity, instead of going into the little fellow's mouth were poured into his bosom, a feat with which he seemed highly delighted, judging from his crowing and the violent gesticulation of his arms.

"Why, Lillie, what are you doing?" remonstrated her mother. "You are a naughty girl to soil your little brother's night-dress. Just see how you have spilled the milk on his clean white blanket."

"Me want to dive 'ittle Willie his dinner," lisped the young offender.

"But you are not old enough to give baby his dinner. My little daughter must never do so again."

Whatever the child saw others do, she endeavored to imitate, and this propensity to copy her elders was the cause of a large share of the mischief she committed. Sometimes this inclination led her and others into difficulty and danger. She often selected her little brother as the subject of her experiments, because his ignorance and helplessness opposed no obstacles, and sometimes she herself became the victim of her own audacity.

One day she had been watching her father go through the operation of shaving, and when he had finished the task, he incautiously left his shaving implements on the top of a chest of drawers under the looking glass. As soon as he left the room, Lillie seized the opportunity to perform the same ceremony

on her own dimpled cheeks. She quickly mounted a chair, seized the brush, drew a few strokes across her chin, and then took the razor from its case and began operating, but in doing this she cut her skin. The wound was fortunately only slight, but it bled profusely, which so alarmed the child that her screams brought her mother to the scene of the uproar.

Harvey Howard spent his long winter evenings at home, which he devoted to mental culture. His early advantages had been limited, but possessing a vigorous mind he resolved to make amends for his disadvantages, and in these laudable efforts he found both assistance and sympathy in the companion of his choice. The latter had received what was considered a good education and, besides, she was endowed with natural talents something above the average of ordinary persons. To a refined taste, was added a quick perception of the beauties of nature, and a love of poetry, and as a balance to these qualities she possessed sound judgment and a nice sense of propriety. Many of her friends disapproved her course when she married Howard, believing she had buried the talents which might have made her a brilliant member of society, but his manly virtues won her esteem and then her love.

Her husband's pursuits were congenial to her tastes in some respects, inasmuch as it brought her in contact with nature so constantly and familiarly. Even the more laborious and less interesting duties of a

farm-house had charms for her that few others would have felt. To make a happy home and exert a healthful social and moral influence in it was her highest earthly ambition, and indeed she reigned as a benignant queen over her household. Husband and children tacitly acknowledged her supremacy, though she was hardly conscious of it, and never asserted her right to this honor, in the case of her companion.

Previous to her marriage, Mrs. Howard had been engaged in teaching, and the experience acquired in that capacity deeply impressed her mind with the sense of parental responsibility, and she resolved, after becoming a mother, to spare no pains in educating her own children; therefore, in their earlier years, she assumed the entire charge of their instruction. Their moral and religious training received her first care, for however highly she valued mental culture, she considered it of the greatest importance to improve the susceptible period of childhood in giving a permanent bias to the character.

Anna, the eldest child, had been taught the rudiments of knowledge both from books and oral instruction; besides, she could assist her mother in the lighter household duties and the care of the younger members of the family. Mrs. Howard found her children quite unlike in their dispositions, which led her to vary her methods of instruction and discipline. The eldest daughter was thoughtful beyond her years,

sensitive, and disposed to petulance; the youngest was impulsive and affectionate, but independent and wilful, inquisitive, and prone to find out the reason of things. Whenever she acquired a new idea she could not rest satisfied until it was imparted to some one else, usually her little brother, and even her kitten was made the confidant of her discoveries.

The watchful mother was aware of the difficult task of controlling and properly directing the mind of such a child, and sometimes her efforts seemed fruitless, but after years of persevering and faithful training she was rewarded for her efforts, and lived to see the harvest.

The supper table had been cleared away, the tea dishes washed and put in their places in the neatly arranged cupboard, the little work table with its fringed white dimity covering was removed from the corner which it occupied during the day to its place before the cheerful fire, and the large family Bible, a mother's parting gift, was placed on it. Two brass candlesticks holding lighted candles, a pair of japanned snuffers on a tray of the same material, embellished with gilt flowers, completed the decorations of the little stand. On one side was placed an arm-chair with a pair of men's slippers beside it; on the other stood an old-fashioned rocking-chair, stuffed and covered with patchwork of red and black cloth, the squares of which were ornamented with representations of flowers and baskets of fruit, all the work of a

grandmother's loving hands. The arm-chair was occupied by the master of the household, while his companion sat in the other, during their quiet winter evenings. Lillie sat by her father, rocking her gray kitten, which was taking great liberties with the curls of its young mistress. Anna sat near the baby's cradle, to which she now and then gave a maternal jog with her foot.

As it was a custom in this family to have the evening devotions before the younger members retired to rest, Mr. Howard opened the Bible, and in an impressive manner read the 46th Psalm, beginning "God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble," etc., after which he offered a brief but fervent petition to the Divine Being. After these family devotions Mrs. Howard prepared Lillie for bed, and taught her to repeat the Lord's Prayer, when the child used great freedom with the sacred text, persisting in repeating cake for bread. Finally, after many digressions, the prayer was ended, much to the satisfaction of the impatient learner, though her serious minded sister was greatly shocked at the little prattler's irreverence, while her mother could not repress a smile at the whimsical freaks of the child. After the little ones had retired for the night, the industrious mother was busy with the contents of her work-basket for the remainder of the evening.

"Harvey," said Mrs. Howard, "the psalm you read this evening is peculiarly consoling to the afflicted

and tempted believer. I have often read and admired it, but never have I been so impressed with its sublime thought as now."

"It impressed my mind very forcibly," replied her husband. "Do you think, my dear, that we could trust as firmly and confidingly in Jehovah as the Psalmist did, when temptations and afflictions assail us?"

"I don't know," replied his wife; "we can place but little confidence in ourselves, and can meet fiery trials only through Divine assistance. I shudder when I think that we have had so few sorrows, lest our Heavenly Father may see that we need some new affliction to prepare us for our work here, and for higher enjoyment beyond this life; yet the trial may come in a manner we little expect."

"Let us, Paulina, endeavor to be in a frame of mind to bear either prosperity or adversity, both of which are severe tests of one's steadfastness."

"Is it ever permitted to mortals to obtain a glimpse of future events? Have some persons an intimation of what is to happen to themselves or friends? Whence arise those sudden and unaccountable presentiments which occasionally come to persons of firm nerves, and clear, cool judgment?"

"These and kindred subjects are interesting questions for psychologists," replied the husband.

Had Paulina Howard attempted to account for her unusual forebodings, she would probably have attrib-

uted them to disordered nerves, or imperfect digestion, which, no doubt, apply to many cases of the kind, but with her this was not true. She was both healthy and cheerful, neither had her fears been awakened by previous calamities, which often arouse a suspicion of danger.

CHAPTER II.

A SNOW STORM.

"All day the gusty north wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before."

As the night advanced, the wind began to rise, at first with a low moaning sound, like the sigh of a gentle spirit, in the pine grove near, then it gradually increased, until it resembled the roar of distant waters coming near and nearer, when the sobbing billow passed by with a plaintive, dying wail, followed by others in succession, all through the night. To a lively imagination there is something melancholy and even startling in the hollow murmuring or piercing shriek of a winter's tempest, as heard resounding through the forest, or as it comes searching about our dwellings, making every door and window tremble, as if these sad, unearthly sounds were the sighs and wails of unhappy spirits, or the exultant shouts of demons, holding their nightly revels. The mournful sounds were the harbingers of misfortune to the inmates of Glen Cottage, though they understood it not. They were occasionally aroused by the whistling wind or the dashing of the snow against the windows, but otherwise they took no notice of the storm until morning.

It was snowing quite fast when Mr. Howard issued

from the house to attend to the wants of his mute dependents of the barn, and as he opened the stable door the gentle Fleety gave a neigh of recognition, intimating she had a keen appetite for breakfast. The oxen, cows, and sheep were all bountifully fed, while the fowls came flocking around their master for their share of his attention. On returning to the house, he remarked to his wife that there had not fallen much snow during the night, and though it was storming fast then, and was likely to continue to snow through the day, he had decided to go to the village directly after breakfast, despatch his business as soon as possible, and return before the roads became blocked.

"My dear, don't think of going to-day in this storm," replied his wife, "wait until another time, when the weather is more favorable."

"I have a payment to make; the note is due to-day, and Mr. Merill is very exact in business transactions, therefore, I should not like to disappoint him; besides, it is very important for a man to keep his word."

"I acknowledge the force of your argument, but either my feelings or my judgment are opposed to them," replied Mrs. Howard.

After breakfast, and the usual morning duties were finished, Mr. Howard led Fleety from the stable, tackled her to a strong sleigh adapted to the deep snows of the country roads, drove up to the door, and threw over her a warm blanket, to protect her from the cold, while he was preparing himself for the

perilous journey. When ready to depart, little Willie raised his arms as a sign to be taken from his cradle, while Lillie pulled her father's coat to gain his attention which, for several minutes, she had vainly tried to do, saying, "Me want to ride, papa." Imprinting a kiss upon the lips of each of his children and also of their mother, Mr. Howard sprang into the sleigh and was soon out of sight.

The domestic cares of her family engrossed the thoughts and occupied the time of Paulina Howard so that for a while she took no notice of the storm raging without, but after the more urgent duties of her household had been attended to, her anxiety for the absent husband and father was awakened. Every gust of wind and every dash of snow against the windows sent a thrill of anguish to her heart. She attempted to divert her mind by reading some entertaining book, but the effort was useless. The words conveyed no meaning to her absent thoughts. She then endeavored to find diversion with her children, by telling them stories and in listening to their childish prattle. Anna shared, in some degree, her mother's anxiety, and frequently expressed the wish that it would stop snowing and that papa would come home.

Lillie had exhausted all her persuasive powers and patience in trying to teach her obdurate gray kitten. She had taken her picture alphabet, her own knowledge of which comprised half a dozen letters, and

amused herself for an hour by teaching her mute playmate those mystical characters which have sorely puzzled the dawning intellect of so many rational beings, but the young teacher's efforts met with little encouragement, for kitty would suddenly spring at the book, and quickly turn over the rustling leaves or she would adroitly busy her little saucy paw with Lillie's curls, or perhaps give a sudden bound half across the room, and then whirl round after her tail. Finally the discouraged child burst into tears, crying, "Kitty won't say A."

The child's grief arrested the attention of her mother, who, to divert her, placed Lillie in a chair by the window that she might watch the falling snow. In the early part of the storm it fell quite moderately, but as the day advanced it increased in violence, while the wind blew it into huge drifts, blocking the roads, covering the fences, and even piled it up to the eaves of the houses, so that no ingress or egress could be had without shovelling through the drifts. In front of Glen Cottage, the wind, suddenly turning a corner, had massed the snow into a heap, like the ridge of a mountain, with a variety of graceful curves. In another place it had capriciously taken all the snow, leaving the ground bare, and borne it along to the corner of the shed, where it was piled up like a pyramid.

A snow-storm, to a lover of nature, has many charms. It combines the beautiful and the sublime.

The roaring of the winds through the forest, the swiftly descending showers of feathery snow, the vast masses of accumulating drifts, the difficulty and danger of encountering the angry elements, the exceeding beauty of the scene after the storm has subsided, presenting vast fields of spotless purity, with graceful waves covering the earth, the trees bending with their wintry burdens, the mountains enveloped in their white mantles, — all combine to render a snow-storm one of the grandest and most beautiful of Nature's varied phenomena.

Mrs. Howard thought her husband would return by noon, but twelve o'clock came and no living object was visible through the flying clouds of snow which obscured the scene. One, two, three long hours passed, and still the anxious watcher moved from window to window to catch a glimpse of the object of her intense solicitude, but all in vain ; nothing could be seen or heard save the huge piles of snow and the roaring of the wind. She expected Harvey would surely be at home before dark, and made preparations for tea. The table was spread with a clean white cloth, and the dishes were arranged in perfect order; rich yellow butter and cheese were brought from the pantry, a bowl of sweet cream was poured into a tin basin and placed over the burning coals, the bread was cut into slices and toasted before the fire to make a dish of which her husband was fond.

While these preparations were going on at the

cottage, the husband and father was struggling with the fierce elements in order to reach his peaceful home and loving family. He had no difficulty in getting to the village of Jefferson, three miles distant from his home, although it was snowing all the time, but on arriving at Merill's store, greatly to his disappointment, he learned from his boy that the proprietor had gone down the river on some business which would detain him for an hour or two.

"Well, then, I will wait for him," said Mr. Howard, after revolving the subject over in his own mind, and then drove his horse under the shed, carefully protecting her from the cold, and went into the store. Occupied with a newspaper, an hour passed quickly away, but the storm, in the meantime, increased in violence. The wind blew so furiously that it was almost impossible to see an object across the street. Howard began to grow impatient at Merill's prolonged absence, while thoughts of his defenceless family added strength to his anxiety. Finally, after waiting another hour, which seemed an age, he started with the intention of going to find Mr. Merill. but he went no farther than the shed, thinking it more prudent to reserve his own and Fleety's strength for his hazardous journey home.

The young farmer was not a person to be appalled by common dangers and difficulties, therefore he did not relinquish the object of his business. He was hopeful and vigorous, and accustomed to encounter

the storms of a New England winter, as they were known many years ago, but the thought of his beloved ones at home, and the anxiety his wife would feel at his prolonged absence, troubled his mind.

After waiting some time longer, a sleigh drove up to the store, and a person so completely covered with snow as not to be recognized jumped out and began to divest himself of some of his wrappings. First, his fur mittens, cap, and tippet were removed, and then an overcoat with fur lining, cuffs, and collar were thrown off, revealing the figure of a man of middle life, known as the village merchant.

"How d'ye do, Howard? Glad to see you; a severe storm," said Merill, in a rapid tone and hurried manner.

"Very well, sir. I have been waiting several hours to see you."

"Ah, yes, to-day is the 15th of the month. Yes, friend Howard, promptness in attending to business, as Uncle Jim used to say, is of the first importance. I've spent all the forenoon, beside exposing myself in this terrible storm, to collect a debt of Josh Tompkins. He promised to call and settle yesterday, and if he had kept his word, it would have saved me a great deal of trouble."

"So it seems," replied Howard. "If agreeable to you, we will transact our business, as I am impatient to get home."

Merill, never reluctant to settle accounts, espe-

cially if the balance was in his favor, produced his papers and began to examine them.

"I am able to pay you this sum," said Howard, handing him a roll of bills; "it is not so much as I could wish, but it is all the savings of our last year's labor. With a few more payments, I hope to have my farm free from debt."

"Oh, you need be in no hurry," replied the trader; "you can take your own time."

The village store-keeper was a shrewd man, always looking out for the main chance. He had invested largely in landed estate by letting money on mortgages, and in this manner coming into possession of several salable farms, whose owners were unable to redeem them. Howard had given him the same kind of security, and was paying a good interest, so that his creditor was perfectly willing that the debt should remain as long as the interest was paid, but the debtor had managed to liquidate also a part of the principal each year.

It was with proud satisfaction that Harvey Howard left the store of Mr. Merill, after paying the last dollar of his year's hard earnings. He felt some of the burden of a debt removed, and could breathe more freely, for the consciousness of owing anyone was galling to his independent mind, so that he began to retrace his journey towards home in a cheerful, hopeful spirit.

The village of Jefferson lay along the banks of the

river La Molle, where the snow seldom drifted, and for half a mile it was comparatively easy for the sleigh to glide along; but after leaving the main street, the road being hilly and not much travelled, the snow had drifted so that all traces of the highway in many places were completely obliterated. Then began the struggle for man and beast. Sometimes a high wall of snow crossed the road and suddenly arrested their progress, and before they could proceed it must be demolished by the snow shovel and a path be made for the horse. Frequently, the traveller was obliged to take Fleety from the sleigh, lead her round the drift into the road, then drag the vehicle himself over the snow, which had become so compact as to support his own weight, with some skill on his part and an occasional plunge into the bank. In this manner he toiled on for some hours, so slow was his progress before he came into the neighborhood of his home. In the first part of his journey he was vigorous and hopeful, while the thought of rejoining his family stimulated him to great exertion in order to reach his home before dark.

The cold became intense; the wind blew furiously, and, in consequence of the deep snow and increasing darkness, it was difficult to keep the road. By long abstinence from food and the excessive fatigue of battling with the elements, Howard's strength began to give way, before he had accomplished half his journey, and the sensation of cold was gradually

succeeded by languor and drowsiness. To yield to these feelings he knew would be dangerous, therefore he struggled against them for a time, while the fear of not being able to reach home nerved him to the most strenuous efforts; but after toiling on for an hour longer, the strong and resolute hero was forced to yield. Anxiety for himself and family gave way to indifference, and he quietly yielded himself to his fate. He thought it would be a luxury to lie down upon the snow to sleep, while visions of perfect repose occupied his thoughts, and he felt an irresistible impulse to yield to their influence. He gradually became more insensible to external scenes, and the storm, home, and friends were all forgotten in the delightful sensations he experienced.

When he reached a tract of woods through which he must pass, his mind was in a dreamy, semi-conscious state, in which surrounding objects became confused, blended, and transformed into airy visions. The trees, loaded with snow, suggested immense marble columns, whose tops reached to the clouds, while aisles and arches, glittering with diamonds, extended into boundless space. He thought he was passing through vast halls and corridors, with the ease and swiftness of disembodied spirits, and that melodious sounds greeted his ear, and thus he was borne along in this delightful hallucination until he was suddenly brought to the verge of a descent over which he plunged headlong, and knew nothing more.

CHAPTER III.

A GOOD SAMARITAN.

"Good deeds in this world done
Are paid beyond the sun;
As water on the root
Is seen above in fruit."

"JOHN, did n't a sleigh drive up to the shed?" said Mr. Walton to his son.

"I think so, father."

They listened a few moments, but as no one entered, John went to the door and saw a horse and sleigh, but no driver.

"That is Howard's team," said Mr. Walton; "he has met with some accident. The horse is sweaty and trembling in every limb. Here, Harry," to his second son, a lad of fourteen years, "take this horse and put her in the barn, then bring out old Pete in less than no time and harness him for the sleigh. John, put on your frock, take the lantern, be as quick as possible, and jump in with me." This bold, sturdy youth of seventeen was not long in getting ready for this sudden emergency, and father and son were soon in quest of their missing neighbor.

Mr. Daniel Walton lived only about one hundred rods from the Howards, though their dwellings were

not in sight of each other as a gentle swell of the land concealed Glen Cottage from his home. At the foot of a hill, about one fourth of a mile from the latter, the road was crossed by a stream known in that region as "Bell Brook." The bridge over it was a rude structure made of logs, with little or no protection on the sides against accidents. The distance to the water below was from twelve to fifteen feet.

After Mr. Howard had become too much stupefied with the cold to guide his horse, she took her own course. For some distance before coming to Bell Brook the road was lined on either side by forest trees so that Fleety had but little difficulty in keeping the path, but as she issued from the woods the snow drifts again opposed her progress. She seemed aware of her responsibility, for after she was left to herself and ceased to hear the encouraging voice of her master, she apparently acted with great caution in getting through the snow with her precious burden. There were but a few rods between the forest and the bridge before mentioned, but to cross in safety was a hazardous undertaking, for want of suitable protection on the sides of the structure. The snow had drifted so as to incline the sleigh to one side, which threw Howard out, and being so near the edge he fell to the ice below, while the horse and sleigh went on without further accident.

Mr. Walton had not proceeded far before he left the team to the care of John, and taking a lantern

advanced on foot, carefully examining every object in his way, lest he might pass by the unfortunate man without seeing him. He had started so soon after receiving notice of the accident that the track of Howard's sleigh had not been entirely effaced by the drifting snow, and by close inspection of every rod of ground, he judged that it could not have been overset between his house and the bridge. On arriving at the brook, Mr. Walton discovered tracks very near the edge; the thought occurred to him to raise his lantern so as to throw its light upon the stream below, when his quick eye detected a dark mass which he at once concluded to be the object of his search.

He shouted to John to hasten with the team, and as soon as he had joined his father, the two proceeded to descend to the stream below, but before they could reach it they were obliged to make a path with their shovels which they applied with vigor. They soon forced a way to the object seen from the bridge, that proved to be the unconscious form of Harvey Howard. They returned with it as rapidly as circumstances allowed, hoping to restore animation by using proper remedies, if indeed life had not already become extinct.

"Wife," said Walton, "get ready your spare room, for I've found Howard senseless with the cold, and I'm afraid I shall have a hard task to revive him." Mrs. Jane Walton, generally known as "Aunt Jenny," was a genial, kind-hearted woman, whose sympathies

for all rational and irrational beings, whatever their deserts, knew no bounds. Her benevolence was not of the sentimental kind, which expends itself in sighs, tears, and kind words, all well enough as far as they go, but she added to these a helping hand. On hearing this abrupt and startling intelligence she was for a moment lost in amazement, but her practical good sense came quickly to her aid, and she hastily made preparations for the accommodation of her unfortunate neighbor. It would have been a perilous undertaking to send for a physician during a storm so severe, for Dr. Clive, the only medical man in the town, resided at the village, and no one would be willing to expose himself unless absolutely necessary.

The early settlers of the country had, from necessity, been compelled to rely upon their own judgment and skill, to a great extent, when sudden illness or accident occurred among themselves, and the experience thus acquired rendered the advice of a physician less frequently necessary than in populous regions, where the inhabitants are more inclined to refer all sanitary questions to a professional adviser. Mr. Walton, who had settled on his farm when it was a "waste howling wilderness," twenty years before, understood the signs of the climate, both from experience and observation, since he had rescued more than one human being from the dangers and hardships of winter; therefore he knew what remedies to apply in such cases as that of Mr. Howard. It was some

time, however, before he could discover any signs of life in his patient, when a little fluttering about the heart encouraged him to persevere in his humane effort.

"What will Mrs. Howard think of her husband's absence?" inquired Mrs. Walton. "She will be fearfully anxious about him."

"Yes, wife, you are right to think of her. I had forgotten she must be informed."

Mr. Walton's presence of mind seldom failed him in an emergency, therefore, calling his son Harry, he said to him, "You may go to Mrs. Howard and tell her what has happened."

"Why not send John, who is older and stronger?" interposed his mother.

"I have work for him which Harry cannot do," was the reply. The lad, proud to be entrusted with a difficult mission, was ready to obey. "Put on snow-shoes and hang the tin horn about your neck, that in case you get into trouble, you can let us know it. Stay all night, and see to the work of attending to the chores of the barn in the morning. Hold, not quite so fast!" The lad, in his eagerness, started to go before receiving all his orders. "You need not wait until morning, but look after the cattle to-night, since Howard left home early in the day, and I am sure no woman could possibly go out in this storm."

The mother followed her favorite son from the room to assist him in making preparations to brave the

storm. He put on a long wollen frock over his ordinary dress, and wore a warm cap tied under his chin, while his mother wound a long tippet several times around his neck, and tied it in front. He put on leggins to protect his feet and ankles, and a pair of shaggy mittens on his hands. When armed and equipped with snow-shoes, horn, and lantern, Harry was ready for his adventure, but not without some chafing of his independent spirit by the cautions of his tender mother. He wished she would n't always "keep him tied up to her apron strings"; he guessed he could take care of himself; he would show what he could do, and that he should have attended to the chores of the barn if his father had n't told him. The Waltons had three sons, the two already mentioned, and a third named Arthur, who was too young to understand the cause of the recent catastrophe. They had lost two daughters in one week some years before by that terrible scourge of children, the scarlet fever, therefore it was natural that the mother should feel a tender solicitude for those of her family that had been spared to her.

Before Harry left, Mrs. Walton very judiciously qualified her husband's brief orders, by advising her son not to make known to the full extent Mr. Howard's danger, but say he had become so chilled by the cold, and Fleety was so tired that it was thought advisable for him to remain all night at their house, and in the morning, after the road was "broken

out," he would return, if he was able, to his own home. "Poor Mrs. Howard; it would break her heart to know his real condition. By morning I hope he will be himself again." Her husband's voice from another room cut short her reflections, and Harry was allowed to go on his errand.

The sorrow of young hearts is transient, passing away as a light cloud which, for a moment, partially obscures the brightness of the sun. So had it been with the younger members of Glen Cottage; they had, for several hours, been wrapped in peaceful slumbers; the fire on the hearth had burned out, leaving only a few smouldering brands; the candle, with its feeble rays, only revealing the gloom and darkness of the room, had burned down to its socket and was about to go out, when the watchful eye of Paulina Howard caught the glimpse of a light dancing about here and there in the stormy darkness. Sometimes she lost sight of it entirely, and thought it only a delusion of her excited imagination; then it would appear again while all the time it seemed to be approaching nearer the house. "Can it be my husband?" thought she. "He may have been obliged to leave his horse and return on foot," and her heart bounded for joy at the idea of seeing him again. Then the question would arise, "Is it some messenger to announce the fatal tidings of his death?" when she would experience a keen anguish, lest her fears should prove true. She was not, however, permitted to

remain long in doubt, for presently a rap was heard at the door which, though gentle, drove the bloom from her cheeks and the strength from her limbs; she sank down upon a chair, while the call for admission became louder. Recovering herself in a few moments she opened the door and found there the young lad.

Mrs. Howard saw with amazement the queer little object before her, but did not recognize him until she was accosted by "Good evening, marm," when she knew the voice, and anxiously inquired what had happened. Harry, a boy of quick instincts, took no notice of her alarm, but quietly said, "A very hard storm," which led her to see the impropriety of keeping him standing in the cold, when she admitted him without further question, lighted a fresh candle, placed more fuel on the fire and proceeded to assist him to remove his outside garment.

"What could have brought you out this stormy night?" inquired his friend. "Something unusual has happened, I am sure. Have you heard from or seen Mr. Howard?" The words of the last question were scarcely audible, for her emotions were too strong to be suppressed. The boy then told her as many of the circumstances before narrated, as his mother had suggested, adding that he thought she would be anxious and lonesome, and he would stay with her through the night, if she liked. Mrs. Howard felt a great weight had been removed from her heart as her

husband was still alive. She thanked the lad with tears of gratitude for his kind act in exposing himself to the severity of the storm in the darkness of the night, but her solicitude could not be entirely overcome, therefore she made further inquiries. Harry tried to evade answering her questions by saying his father told him to go immediately to the barn, and see if everything was right there.

Love is quick to detect the presence of danger to the object beloved, and the devoted wife perceived that she had not been informed of all the truth in relation to her husband, but she resolved to endure in silence the painful suspense until the next day should reveal the worst. That night, however, brought no repose to her agitated mind; her imagination, rendered intensely vivid by anxious watching and the violence of the tempest without, conjured up the wildest phantoms producing a state of mind bordering on frenzy. She was aware of this, and concluded she had greatly exaggerated the horrors of her situation, but this did not calm her feelings; she knew some change must be made to divert her thoughts, so she arose and sat by a window opening to the east, and watched for the dawn of a day which proved the saddest in her life.

The storm had subsided, the sky was clear, and the stars were sparkling like brilliants in their dark setting. A feeble light was glimmering in the east, indicating the approach of day; the faint illumination

gradually increased in brightness, until all the sparkling gems of the firmament disappeared, when a soft rose tint was diffused over the eastern sky, which deepened in color and painted the clouds still hovering over the quiet earth, and imparting to the snow a delicate hue, presenting a scene of exquisite beauty.

Paulina Howard, whose love of nature in all her moods was intense, approaching almost to adoration, forgot for the moment her anxiety, and exclaimed aloud, "How beautiful; how grand!" and remained watching the enchanting scene until the sun rose in his majesty. The "King of Day" is a powerful charmer, for he not only dispels the darkness of nature, but also the gloom of a troubled spirit. Sunlight is often a better remedy for curing the "maladies of the mind," and preventing a long train of physical evils, than all the stores of the *materia medica.* Such was its influence upon the distressed mistress of Glen Cottage as she witnessed this early morning glory, when the ruler of the day, emblem of the Son of Righteousness, rose to warm and enlighten the world. She was encouraged to resign herself and all her anxious cares into the hands of a merciful Father, and abide the issue. The psalm read on the evening before the storm came to her mind with a new interpretation, and the recollection brought from her eyes the tears which relieved her burdened spirits.

The importunate summons from infantile voices called her attention to her little flock, when the wants

of her family kept her busy all the morning, and partially diverted her thoughts from painful reflections. Harry Walton had been busily employed in shovelling the snow from the paths, and in caring for the inmates of the barn, with a zeal and fidelity which justified his claims to the same credit given to his elder brother.

Every effort had been made to restore Mr. Howard to consciousness. Mr. Walton thought he discovered symptoms of life, and was as hopeful as the circumstances would allow. He depended much upon the strong constitution of his patient for a safe and speedy recovery, and said to his wife, "If Howard has sustained no serious internal injury from his fall, I see no reason why he may not, in the course of a few days, be out of danger." The signs of returning consciousness grew stronger through the night, and towards morning the invalid had so far recovered as to speak in a low, faint voice. Mr. Walton eagerly listened to catch the first articulate words he uttered to ascertain whether his reason had been affected by the disaster. At first, he could hear only a word now and then, but these indicated that the sufferer thought he was yet struggling with the tempest. His words increased as his consciousness returned, but his sentences were incoherent, and indicated that he supposed he was struggling with some fearful danger. These symptoms excited the fears of his watchers, who believed it was important to seek medical advice as soon as possible.

When daylight appeared, Mr. Walton called his eldest son, and directed him to take the oxen and sled, with the necessary implements for making his way through the drifts, and get the neighbors, with their teams, to assist in "breaking out the roads." In the course of two hours John had collected three or four strong sleds drawn by oxen, and about a dozen stalwart men, at his father's door. People living in the country, with a scattered population, feel a lively interest in one another's welfare, and are prompt to obey the calls of neighborly kindness, even at the expense of personal loss and inconvenience.

"Allen," said Mr. Walton, addressing one of his neighbors, "will you take your team and make a road to Howard's, and send Mary down in my sleigh to stay with the children, then bring Howard's wife? Tell my son Harry to remain and do the chores." The person addressed immediately set to work, while the others waited for special directions. Two strong teams were sent forward towards the village with injunctions to call on the inhabitants along the way for assistance, and to make all possible speed to bring the doctor.

CHAPTER IV.

BURIED HOPES.

"We see but dimly through the mists and vapors
Amid these earthly damps."

THE delirium of the sick man increased, and a high fever attended it, which alarming symptom excited the fears of the cool and unimpassioned Daniel Walton. "I would give my best cow," said he, "to see Howard fairly over this," while Aunt Jenny could not restrain her tears as she heard their patient talk almost incessantly of his wife and little ones. Sometimes he would address them as if they were about him, in the innocent joy of former days, and then as if they were in imminent danger, while he was endeavoring to rescue them. It is always an affecting scene, when a strong man, upon whom the weaker portion of the household has been accustomed to depend for support and protection, is stricken down by disease or accident.

By the middle of the forenoon, Mrs. Howard, with her infant, arrived at Mr. Walton's, the other children having been left at the cottage, in the care of Mary Allen. A short time before she came her husband had fallen into a broken slumber, and it was

thought best not to disturb him by entering the room. His wife had been schooling her heart to endure the worst, and thought she should be calm, but when she was informed of the real state of the case it seemed like driving the dagger anew into her already bleeding heart. Though the kindness and sympathy of her neighbors were appreciated, yet she found it difficult to subdue the agony of her spirit and preserve an outward calmness. Arthur Walton tried to amuse baby Willie Howard, but when the little fellow could not see his mother he became alarmed at finding himself in a strange place, and began to cry. The well-known voice of the child attracted the attention of his father in the adjoining room, who, aroused from his slumber, said, "Willie, Paulina," in a feeble voice, but more rational than it had seemed before.

Mrs. Walton thought this the most favorable moment for his wife to speak to him, and led her to his bedside. The fever had abated, and the invalid lay with his eyes closed, motionless and pale, and but for the trembling of his lips and a rapid labored respiration, one would have supposed his life had departed. The heart-stricken wife gave one look at his features, then sank upon a chair overcome by her emotions. As if conscious of her presence, her husband pronounced her name again, which instantly brought her to his side. Bending over him, she said, "Harvey." The voice acted as a spell to recall his wandering reason; a smile of recognition passed over his features; he

opened his eyes and said, "Is this you, Paulina?" then his mind was lost again. In the course of the afternoon Dr. Clive arrived, and was welcomed by anxious friends.

Who does not know with what a palpitating heart, what anxious fears, what searching looks, what suspense between hope and despair, the physician is conducted, for the first time to the couch of the sufferer when life is hanging on a mere thread? How closely the sorrowing friends watch his countenance to read there the sick one's fate, and how timidly do they ask his opinion, lest his answer might blast their hopes.

Dr. Silas Clive was a man in middle life, tall, somewhat spare, and constitutionally inclined to pulmonary disease, which forced him to be cautious about exposing his health, a judicious act, since he was obliged to ride long distances to visit his patients in the cold and storms of a rigorous climate. Over his ordinary dress he wore a long, gray coat with a hood which he could draw at pleasure, over a fur cap; besides this he was furnished with fur tippet and mittens, and on a cold winter day two buffalo robes completed his outfit. His person was so completely disguised that a stranger would be at a loss to say what species of animal he represented, for nothing of his features could been seen except a pair of keen gray eyes, peering over his muffler, and the end of a somewhat prominent nose.

The doctor was very deliberate in all his movements. It was some time before his horse and sleigh were properly cared for before his entering the house, when he was obliged to go through the process of disrobing. This operation was performed with as much precision as if he was removing the cerements of an Egyptian mummy, and, arranging his garments over the back of a chair, he seated himself before the warm fire. After some remarks in regard to the weather, he quietly made a few inquiries about the patient. Mr. Walton briefly related the circumstances of the accident, the symptoms of the sufferer, and what had been done for him. All this time Mrs. Howard had been watching Dr. Clive's countenance for some indication of his opinions, but with all her scrutiny she was unable to decide what he thought. Not a muscle of his face moved; he did not even raise his eyes but sat looking intently into the fire with imperturbable gravity, and waited until Mr. Walton had finished his story, then rose and inquired carelessly where Howard was.

The doctor was not indifferent to human suffering; he did not regard his patients as mere subjects for physiological experiments, but he considered them as belonging to the great brotherhood of man, needing sympathy as well as professional advice. His apparent insensibility was the result of a constant effort to repress a naturally impulsive temperament. Human suffering always awakened his sympathies which were

usually manifested by some considerate act of benevolence, all the more acceptable because offered so timely and unostentatiously.

When the doctor entered the room of the patient and saw what a change had been wrought in a few hours, in one whose prospects for a long life were, a short time before, so promising, he was deeply moved, and when he took the hand of his patient, a startled look, for an instant, passed over his features, then his countenance assumed a settled, anxious expression.

Dr. Clive, like most other physicians, did not care to reply to many questions respecting his professional duties, and those he did answer were, usually, brief, though, unlike some in his profession, he never encouraged false hopes, therefore, when he did give an opinion, it was what he believed to be the truth.

With some hesitation, Mrs. Howard ventured to say, "Doctor, what do you think of my husband?"

He gently replied, "Madam, your husband is very ill. He has a brain fever; the crisis will be passed by to-morrow morning, but until then I shall not abandon all hope," slightly emphasizing the word *all*, which did not escape the notice of Mrs. Howard.

He then gave some directions about the remedies to be used and strictly enjoined that no one be admitted into the sick room, except those attending the patient, and said, "I will return by nine o'clock this evening, and remain with him through the night."

The inhabitants for several miles around Glen

Cottage had heard of the accident to Mr. Howard, and came to offer their services and sympathy. Some of the more inconsiderate were offended at the physician's positive orders, though they knew it would be useless to oppose the firmness of Dr. Clive. Mr. Cutler, an officious though really kind neighbor, said, "The Howards are very exclusive and Walton takes too much upon himself when he allows nothing to be done except by his directions. We have assisted in clearing the roads and now are not allowed to see a sick neighbor. Well, for my part, I shall not urge my services upon them." This was said in an undertone, but it attracted Mrs. Walton's notice, when she explained the necessity for such a prohibition, on account of the danger of excitement, and added, "We are all very grateful for our neighbors' services and we may be obliged to call upon them again for their assistance." These timely remarks made in a kind spirit soothed Mr. Cutler's wounded feelings and restored harmony among the others.

For some unexpected reason, Mr. Chapin, one of the neighbors, did not hear of the accident that had caused so much excitement, until twenty-four hours after the event, when, calling at Walton's, he learned all the particulars.

"Good evening Mr. Walton; what 's the news?"

"Very sad news, Mr. Chapin."

"Why, what 's the matter?"

"Mr. Howard went to the village yesterday, and

coming home was chilled and thrown out of his sleigh at Bell Brook."

"Marvellous, entirely. Was he killed?"

"Not quite so bad as that, but with the cold and the fall I 'm afraid it will go hard with him. He is at my house, and the Doctor has been to see him."

"Marvellous, entirely. I must go home and tell Prudy; perhaps she can help him." She was his wife, to whose decision he always deferred every question. Mr. Chapin's favorite expression when hearing of any news was uttered as if it was one word, as "marvellous 'tirely," which gave him the sobriquet of "Marvellous Chapin." He had the habit of jerking off his words "like the click of a telegraph," hence it required some skill to utter this combination, but by contraction and elision he accomplished the feat.

Prudy was as deliberate as Marvellous was quick, and it required some time for a new idea to enter her cranium, and after it had found a lodging there, she was so shy of the stranger, and so suspicious of its purport, that she was accustomed to scan it from head to foot, inside and out, before she would give it welcome. When at last she became satisfied that it was *bona fide*, a genuine idea, she clung to it with inflexible pertinacity, for her list of such aids was very small.

Marvellous hurried home to tell the news.

"Prudy, Prudy. Where is the woman? Marvellous 'tirely, what, what, Prudy." His wife came from

the pantry after finishing her preparations for a loaf of bread, went to the sink and washed the dough from her hands, wiped them deliberately, and then sat down as quietly as she would have done if her "good man" was not greatly excited while relating the news he had heard.

"Marvellous, Prudy, what can you do? Will you go to the Howards?"

She opened her eyes wide, adjusted her cap strings, took up the corner of her apron and folded it down, then smoothed it out again, and finally, after some time, she seized the idea and replied, "Well, husband, you don't say so!"

Dr. Clive, according to appointment, returned and tended his patient with the gentleness of a careful mother through the night, but no effort of his could arrest the danger. Howard's sufferings prevented any rest until near morning, then he fell into a quiet slumber and remained in this state for several hours. When he awoke he was perfectly sane, but it was a revival that sometimes precedes the final change, and it was apparent that he was approaching the end. The dying man was conscious of his situation, and expressed a wish to see all his family once more, when the absent children were sent for and brought into his presence.

Anna was old enough to comprehend the meaning of the affecting scene, and her heart seemed ready to break as she clung to her father so firmly that it would

seem she wished to detain him longer, when her grief became so demonstrative that she was removed from the room, and it was long before Mrs. Walton's tenderness could soothe her. The other children were too young to understand the loss they were soon to suffer, but the artless and childish efforts of Lillie to calm her mother's grief only increased it, and the children were all taken out of the room after receiving their father's last blessing. Mr. Howard then expressed a wish to be left alone with his wife. After every one had gone out of the room, leaving them together, the husband seemed to gain strength for the last scene.

He related his experience after leaving the village until the accident, then said,

"Paulina, my dear, come near and give me a farewell kiss."

The weeping wife placed her burning lips upon his, which were icy cold, when a shudder came over her, for she had not thought death was so near.

"Dearest, you have been a faithful and affectionate wife. You never caused me one painful feeling. My career has been short, and for you and our children's sake I wish I might recover; but as to myself, my hope is founded on the Rock of Ages. My Redeemer liveth, and I go to inherit the rest prepared for me. It will not be very long before you, my love, and the dear children, I hope, will join me in the world above. You will, I know, endeavor to train our precious ones

for usefulness here and a happy life hereafter. My strength is failing, and I can say no more Will you read to me something encouraging from the Scriptures?"

Mrs. Howard opened a large family Bible and read passage after passage in her soft, clear voice, when the countenance of the dying husband lighted up with intense pleasure, and he placed his hand in hers. The reader paused, and saw that a sudden change had come over him; she gently raised his head, but the spirit had departed so calmly that not a muscle of his placid features had moved. The widowed mourner kissed the cold brow and tenderly replaced him upon the pillow, closed his eyes, adjusted the drapery about the bed, and withdrew for others to complete the last sad offices for the silent dead.

Real grief desires seclusion, and it is not proper to intrude upon the sacredness of those feelings which bereaved hearts indulge.

"Let me die," said one called away in the bloom and promise of youth, "when the fields are clothed with verdure; when the trees are adorned with their leafy ornaments, and the feathered songsters will come and sing my dirge in their branches; when the rose, honeysuckle, and jasmine shall perfume the breezes which play about my tomb; when the bee is humming from flower to flower, and the butterfly is fluttering over hill and meadow; then I shall not be lonely in my quiet grave. But may I not depart when

the smiling fields and blue hills are covered with snow; when the wind with piercing cold rushes through the leafless branches, and bird, insect, and flower have disappeared and nature is laid out in her white shroud. Oh, then it will be gloomy about my dark grave."

Thus thought the disconsolate mourner, as she stood by the cold grave of the loved and early lost, on a bleak December day, as the winds whistled through the leafless branches of a willow near. Finally the sad rites were over, as the sexton threw the last shovelful of earth on the new-made grave, yet the silent mourner stood in speechless agony, until urged to go by sympathizing friends. As if to add another pang to her sorrow, Lillie, who had been watching the operations of the sexton, when she found her father was left behind, shrieked, "Papa will be cold, bring papa back," and it was not until after much persuasion that she could be induced to go without him.

CHAPTER V.

A YOUNG QUESTIONER.

"The face that once like spring-time smiled,
On earth no more thou 'lt see."

THE cottage in the valley, which had sheltered its happy inmates for many years, was still the same; its cheerful sunlight, its attractive neatness and quiet comfort remained unchanged; but to the heart of Paulina Howard her once delightful home became sad and gloomy. The sound of one familiar footstep and one encouraging voice was missing, and one beloved form was absent from the fireside circle, the festive board, and the family altar. A link in the golden chain of domestic life had been broken and could never be restored in this world.

Several friends offered to remain with her through the night after the funeral, but thanking them for their kindness and sympathy, she frankly said she preferred to be alone with her little family that she might have leisure for calm reflection after the exciting scenes of the past few days.

Harry Walton had made himself very useful at the cottage during this time. He had performed faithfully all the out-door tasks, besides the errands neces-

sary on the mournful occasion of Mr. Howard's death and burial.

"Is there anything more for me to do?" said the boy with a cheerful smile.

Then, not wishing to intrude upon the private grief of Mrs. Howard, he said, "If I can be of no further use to-night, I will go home and return in the morning."

"You can go, Harry, if you wish. You have been a great help; a man could have done no better. I hope to prove to you some time how highly I appreciate your kindness." The lad's countenance beamed with pleasure as he received this commendation from one whom he regarded with the greatest respect.

The young widow was now alone with her fatherless children for the first time since the fatal accident which so suddenly clouded her earthly prospects. She must hereafter perform the duties of both parents. How could this be done? While occupied with these thoughts she mechanically went through the arrangements for the evening, and from the force of habit, the little work-table was placed before the fire and the arm-chair by its side. The Bible lay upon the table — it was the hour for evening devotion — and she seemed to be waiting for some one to open its sacred pages; but the arm-chair was tenantless. Painful thoughts occupied her mind, as the reality of her loss presented itself with a force unfelt before, and now came the struggle, whether she could resist

the tide of grief which was rushing upon her or whether she would yield and be engulfed in its waves.

In all her past trials, she had leaned upon the arm of her husband for support; now she must rely upon Divine aid alone for as she was the only guide of three small children, she would need something more than human sympathy and assistance. Should she succumb to a blow which had fallen upon others as well as herself, and yield to a selfish grief? It must not be; her duty to her family, to herself, to society, to the memory of the lost one, and, above all, to her Heavenly Father, forbade it, therefore she would bring all her resolution to overcome it, and in this effort she was confident of Divine assistance.

With a firm resolution, she opened the Scriptures and read passages best adapted to afford encouragement, when new light dawned upon her mind; she read these texts again and again, while every time they were examined she gained fresh courage. Her tears flowed, but they were tears of submissive sorrow and, like the gentle rain falling upon the buried seed, they nourished the precious truth which had been planted in her heart. She folded to her bosom her fatherless babes, and resolved to make their training the chief object of her future life; it had been the dying request of her husband, and for this reason was regarded as a sacred duty; henceforth, she made it a special study how it could best be accomplished.

Before Mrs. Howard's bereavement, her husband, whose views fully coincided with her own on the subject, assisted her in the management of their little family, but these responsibilities would now be hers alone.

Anna had been allowed to sit up later than the younger children, but when her hour came for retiring, without waiting to be told, she withdrew to her little bed-room communicating with her mother's more commodious sleeping apartment, but on this evening when her bed-time came, instead of retiring as usual, she went to her mother, threw her arms around her neck, and burst into tears. Mrs. Howard took the sobbing child in her arms and, after allowing time for the vehemence of her grief to subside, said, "My dear little daughter, what makes you weep so?"

"I don't want to die and be buried in the ground. It is all dark and cold there."

"Have you been thinking about dying, Anna?"

"Yes, mamma, and I think I should not like to go to heaven."

"Heaven is a very delightful place, my darling; more beautiful than anything you ever saw. It is neither cold nor dark there, and its inhabitants never suffer pain or sorrow, but are always very happy."

"Mamma, you said papa had gone to heaven; why then must he be buried in the grave?"

"Do you understand the difference between your soul and your body?"

"My soul thinks and my body eats, drinks, sleeps, and wears clothes; besides, it feels pain when hurt."

"Yes, and the body is mortal, that is, it must die, but the soul can never die. The body knows nothing, feels nothing, after the soul leaves it. When your father died, his soul left his body, and it is only that which was put in the ground. It cannot feel cold or lonesome, because it knows nothing, but his soul, which knows and feels, has gone to heaven. Have you heard of any persons who were taken to heaven without dying?"

"Yes, mamma. Enoch and Elijah."

"Do you know of any others?"

"No, I have not read of any others in my Bible."

"Then how do you think all good people who have lived in past ages went to heaven?"

"They died, I suppose."

"Yes, and were buried just as your father has been. Now can you tell me who died and was buried, that was greater than Enoch or Elijah?"

"Was it Jesus, mother?"

"Yes, my dear. He has lain in the grave and has taken away its terrors."

"Jesus rose from the grave, mamma. Will papa come back to us?"

"He will rise at some future time, with a new and glorious body."

The countenance of the young inquirer seemed perplexed when her mother added,

"My precious child, you must not think any more of the subject now, but when you are older you may, perhaps, understand more about it. Cannot my little timid child trust herself in her Saviour's arms? He is more gentle and loving than her own mother can be."

Mrs. Howard kissed her and tenderly folded her in her arms, when her troubled spirit was quieted by the accents of maternal love.

Anna was so quiet and reserved in her manners that her mother was not a little surprised at the display of so deep feeling. Her young daughter had taken but little interest in childish pastimes, but was devotedly attached to books, and would often withdraw from play to read in some retired place, free from the intrusion of others. She exhibited a serious thoughtfulness with a tendency to excessive sensibility, which increased as she grew older, and would be likely to cause her much unhappiness in later years. The two sisters were quite different in their characters. Anna was slow to anger, but sullen and not easily conciliated, while Lillie was vehement, though her anger soon subsided. Both were eager to learn, though in a different way. Anna sought knowledge from books, while Lillie, too young to read, depended upon her powers of observation and her skill in asking questions, sometimes amusing and often annoying to the one questioned. Since their mother had been so careful in her instructions, it was not surprising that

her children were superior in attainments to most others of their own age.

The neighbors were so scattered that their families were not often brought into direct communication with one another, except when they met at school, which was kept only a part of the year, and as Anna had never attended one of them, she was acquainted with only a few children of her own age. Her mother had regretted this circumstance, and felt it would be a great mistake to keep her secluded from all young associates, and decided that something must be done to divert her daughter's attention from too close application to reading.

After Harry Walton had finished his morning task at the barn, Mrs. Howard invited him to join the family at the breakfast table, when she inquired about his studies, and the kind of reading he preferred. His replies disclosed his fondness for books of travel and tales of adventure, which had stimulated his desire for more of the kind, not within his limited means. She cordially invited him to examine her bookcase and select what pleased him. The young lad was delighted when he saw "Robinson Crusoe," whose wonderful adventures he had heard of, but had never read.

"I should like this book, if you please," said Harry.

"Certainly," replied Mrs. Howard. "Do you attend school?"

"I have been until within a few days, and intend

to go to-day, unless you have something for me to do."

"I shall not need you. Who is your teacher?"

"Mr. Layton. He is first-rate; I like him very much."

The school had been kept about two weeks when the accident, which cast a gloom over the neighborhood, happened, therefore the teacher had missed, with regret, his much respected pupil.

CHAPTER VI.

A COUNTRY SCHOOL.

"He early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way."

THE district school which Harry attended was a mile from his home, and was taught by an undergraduate from a neighboring State, who had found his way to this obscure neighborhood through the influence of Dr. Clive, a distant relative. The Doctor had known him from his boyhood, and was interested in his struggles for an education. Clive Layton depended chiefly upon his own efforts for support and, like many others in similar circumstances, during his winter vacations he taught a district school in some country village, or rural section of a town, to gain the means (though a teacher's recompense was small) of paying in part his college expenses.

He found the school in Jefferson much like those of other country towns of that period. It comprised about forty pupils, from the age of five years to twenty, in various stages of educational qualification, scarcely half a dozen of whom could, with advantage, be classed together. Arithmetic was the favorite branch of study, but each pupil had "ciphered" just as far as his inclinations or capacities permitted. The

advanced scholars had been allowed to pursue their own course, until some difficulty arrested their progress, when the teacher's aid was required, but nothing like classification had been attempted. "Spelling" stood next on the list of studies, and was stimulated by the practice of spelling matches, "spelling-schools" as they were called. These were held occasionally on winter evenings at the school-houses where parents and friends attended. Geography and grammar received some attention, especially the latter, by the older pupils. Writing had not been reduced to a system, and each pupil settled his own hand-writing, if the remarkable-looking characters could be called such, while reading, defining words, composition, and history received little, if any attention, except reading in the younger classes, which consisted merely in being able to pronounce the words and pause at a comma long enough to count one, at a semi-colon, two, at a colon, three, and four at a period, with a full cadence.

So much did the new teacher find out during the first day; but the dispositions and capacities of the pupils, and the methods necessary to advance them, remained to be learned. There was in the school the usual amount of talent and incapacity, of diligence and laziness, as can be found in any miscellaneous collection of forty or fifty pupils. The school-house, a fair example of others in the country at this period, was a low, wood building without paint, blinds, or curtains, and was about thirty square feet on the ground,

with one door opening directly into the room, though most others had a small entry with an inner door; in front of the building was a grave-yard Why a school-house and a cemetery should be placed near each other, has never been discovered. Was it to tone *down* the youthful spirits of the pupils or to tone *up* their moral sentiments, that their wise fathers placed a perpetual reminder of their mortality before the eyes of their offspring? Whichever it might have been, it failed of its purpose, for the children did not appear to notice the presence of a burying-ground at all, unless a misdirected ball chanced to overleap its barriers, but the wisdom of the district authorities might be called in question on sanitary grounds.

All the trees had been cut down, as though their branches might interrupt the rays of intellectual light coming to the young brains. The inside of the building was as bare of attractions as the outside. At one end was a large fire-place, whose capacity for holding fuel was enormous, but whose wide throat carried away not only smoke, but also a large share of heat. There were two windows on each of the other three sides, curtainless, and through which the sun poured his rays without "let or hindrance." Rows of seats were arranged around the wall, with desks, or rather inclined planes, under which was a shelf for books. This was "boxed" to the floor, and another long seat extended around the room, in front of the larger one, for the small children. Here they sat on a narrow

bench, with an upright board back, during six hours of the day. It was fortunate for their spinal columns that they could roam the fields and inhale the invigorating air of the hills for a large part of the time, since the school year included only about six months, equally divided into summer and winter terms.

On one side of the mammoth fire-place were two or three shelves for the outside garments of the pupils, while a chair and small table for the teacher's use completed the furniture. There was an empty space in the centre of the room for the classes to stand in single line during recitation, when questions were asked and answers given.

The ceiling had been plastered, but in some places it had cracked, showing dark lines like rivers on a map, while in other places it had fallen down, revealing yawning chasms. It could not be said that the walls were entirely without ornament, since the embryo Angelos and Raphaels, not wholly "unknown to fame," had given proofs of latent genius. There were some attempts at houses with irregular windows, and chimneys resembling the Tower of Pisa; horses' legs were jointless, while both ears were on the same side of the head; the animals were attached to wagons with the centre of gravity in a position rather perilous to the driver. Other pupils, more egotistic, had displayed their talent for chirography by inscribing their names upon the walls or cutting them into their desks.

The fuel for the use of the school was furnished by the district, each tax-payer contributing his share, to be drawn and cut for use. The older boys built the fires, each one taking his turn, while the room was swept by the girls.

On the morning of the first day of the term, a large number of scholars had assembled at an early hour, to discuss matters before the master came. There were various opinions expressed as to what ought or ought not to be done; what the teacher's duties were, and what privileges belonged to the scholars. A silent spectator would have thought the master should be the learner, that the intelligence of the youth was in advance of the age, and from the gasconade of the more pugnacious, that none but a successful pugilist would presume to enter upon so hazardous a contest as would be waged against the new teacher.

"I say, Henry Walton, what kind of a chap has your father hired for our teacher?"

"Well, Sol Baldwin, I guess he's awful smart. He's been to college more'n two years, and he can do every sum in the 'rithmetic."

"Aint you proud, now, seein' your father's committee, an' hired a college student? I'll bet he'll learn a few things he had n't dreamed of," said Rock White.

Rockwell White, or Rock White, as he was called, was the pugilist of the district, and his turbulence and quarrelsome disposition had caused trouble to

every new teacher for several winters. He prided himself upon his power to create a disturbance.

"What do you propose to do?" said Alfred Whiteman.

"Do!" repeated Rock, doubling up his fists and flourishing them in pretty close proximity to Alfred's face. "I'd like to see the master who'd durst touch me; would n't I pitch into him!"

"I think, Rock, you better wait and see what kind of a master he will be first. Maybe you 'll like him. At any rate, we should not condemn him before we have seen him."

"Pooty well for you, Mr. Justice of the Peace." Alfred's father held that office. "Hiram, don't you 'spect rousing times this winter?" The latter youth, who was "feeble-minded," was easily persuaded to join any stronger character for good or evil; besides, he had the misfortune to have an intemperate father.

"Now, Rock, I would n't lead him into mischief. If you mean to do wrong yourself, be generous and let Hiram alone," said Matilda Baldwin.

"O, them nice curls, and that span new gown! Mebbe you 'll catch the college dandy."

"Stop, Rock White, don't you insult my sister," interposed Robert Baldwin.

The insolence of Rock was instantly checked, for he feared the flashing eye and compressed lips of the youth whose just indignation he did not care to arouse.

Suddenly all controversy was hushed, and the

excited group took their seats, for Mr. Walton drove up to the door with Mr. Layton, the new teacher. Having entered the room the committee said,

"I have brought you a teacher; he is a gentleman, and expects to be treated as such. He will also regard you as ladies and gentlemen, until you prove to him that you do not deserve the name. Good morning."

The bold defender of his assumed rights was quiet, now that the individual whose authority he had defied was present in his official capacity, nor did he dare to raise his eyes, as if conscious of his unmanly speech, but stealthily took a seat near the door, as if ready to escape should his conduct be exposed.

Mr. Layton spoke a few words to the pupils, appealing to their reason and moral sense. He presumed they all came to be instructed, and that they honestly intended to do the best they could to promote the interests of the school; that they understood nothing could be accomplished without order and close application to study; that in every community each one must sacrifice something for the good of the whole; and that he would assist them in gaining such knowledge as would be useful and promote their happiness and prosperity. He hoped that teacher and pupils would be friends and work together in harmony, and he would try to deserve their confidence.

These timely remarks made a favorable impression on the minds of his pupils, some of whom, influenced by Rock White, had expected he would threaten them

with "pains and penalties" if they did *not* do, or if they *did* do, many things he would mention in a long list of rules and regulations intended expressly to interfere with their liberties. That he did not do so surprised some, won the admiration of others, and silenced those disposed to make mischief. The teacher then stated that the duties of his office were responsible and sometimes difficult, and that he could not faithfully discharge them without Divine aid, and that they also needed the same blessing, therefore he would begin the daily tasks by religious exercises, as reading the Scriptures and prayer. The scholars had been accustomed to "reading round," as they termed it, each pupil reading one or two verses from the New Testament, but Mr. Layton said he would read, and they might open their Bibles and follow his reading. After this exercise he offered a brief prayer, expressed in language all could comprehend.

These preliminaries being closed, the master said, "My young friends, you may select your own studies while I am learning the condition of the school with the object of arranging the classes, but before doing so, I wish you would name one of the most advanced pupils to assist me, as I shall need information on the subject." Robert Baldwin was at once named for the office. The scholars were soon apparently busied with their lessons, though they kept an eye on all that was going on. Baldwin was requested to write a list of the names and ages of the pupils, while Mr.

Layton was examining the text-books and finding out what studies each member of the school had pursued.

At the close of the first day, teacher and pupils were on excellent terms; even Rock White had yielded to the general sentiment. Matters progressed very favorably; the scholars and their friends were highly gratified with the success of the new methods introduced by the teacher. He had aroused a healthy ambition, and under his guidance the pupils could hardly fail to improve rapidly. By frequent appeals to their consciences and self-respect, a higher moral tone was created among them which rendered more stringent methods unnecessary.

CHAPTER VII.

BOARDING ROUND.

"When all the droll experience found
At stranger hearths in boarding round."

"BOARDING round" afforded Mr. Layton some novel experiences. Instead of one boarding place the teachers were furnished with accommodations in different families, with some a week and with others a longer time, according to the number of children they sent to school. Being introduced into different households gave them an opportunity of studying character, for to understand a person well, he must be seen at his own fireside. The school-days included those from Monday morning until Saturday noon, and embraced six hours a day with an "intermission" of one hour at noon. Mr. Layton spent his Sabbaths with Mr. Walton whose home was the headquarters of the district. He was always welcome there, whenever he found his situation unpleasant elsewhere.

"Mr. Layton," said the committee when engaging his services, "you are welcome to come to us at any and all times, but I should advise you to visit every family that invites you, even should you remain only one night; you will gain their good-will by doing so, and remove the prejudices against college students."

"I shall certainly do so, and as far as my limited experience goes, I have generally found it agreeable both to parents and children. At their homes all restraints and official dignity are laid aside, and both host and guest meet as friends and acquaintances. Besides, I know what farmers are, for my father pursued that occupation, and during my boyhood I worked upon a farm."

The family of "'Squire Baldwin," as he was called, was the first boarding place, and as he had a number of children and was considered a well-to-do farmer, two weeks was considered the time he ought to entertain the master.

Solomon Baldwin was a plump, jolly, vigorous man, past middle life, upon whom the cares of a large farm, a numerous family, and an invalid wife sat lightly. He enjoyed his mug of cider, a good story, and a boisterous laugh, in which his whole bulky frame participated. His wife was a perfect contrast to her husband. Of a slight figure when in health, disease had rendered her a mere shadow, so that she seemed like a doll beside her burly husband. She was so quiet, withal, that had it not been for the cough, a premonition of the insidious approach of consumption, her presence would scarcely have been suspected. The cares of the household devolved upon Aunt Ruthy, a sister of the 'Squire, whom she resembled.

The new master was cordially welcomed to the old-fashioned hospitalities of the Baldwins, and during the

long winter evenings the family gathered in a semi-circle around the fire-place where blazed and crackled the burning pine and maple logs, one for light, the other for heat. In one corner sat the 'Squire in his capacious arm-chair, which he filled so completely that it would have been difficult for him to see his own feet. Opposite to him was his delicate wife, supported by cushions and pillows, while between them were Aunt Ruthy and half a dozen sons and daughters of various ages. Placed before the fire was a large mug of cider, a tray of apples, and a basket of butternuts or beechnuts, for the entertainment of the family. The daily or even weekly newspapers were hardly known in the farmers' homes at this period, therefore conversation and story-telling took their place.

"Boys, whose turn is it to draw the cider to-night?" said their father.

"Sol got up last this morning," said Robert, the eldest son. It was a standing joke at the Baldwins', that the latest riser should perform that task, and as Solomon was oftenest caught, it was pretty generally admitted that he was the laziest.

"Well, if I did come *down* last, I did n't have one stocking on the wrong side out. Maybe I should, had I gone to singing-school and known that John Whitman went home with Lottie Allen." A certain young gentleman did n't choose to hear the last remark.

"Come, Nell, go along with me and hold the candle."

"No, you lazy boy, you may hold your own candle." Nevertheless she went, sister-like It fell to the lot of Moses Baldwin to crack the nuts, so he brought forward a flat stone used for the purpose and a hammer. It requires some skill to crack a butternut and preserve the meat whole, but this feat was performed with nearly every nut. While the party were regaling themselves with apples, cider, and nuts, stories were told and "the laugh went round." The 'Squire had been a shrewd observer of human nature, and had a fund of anecdotes, new to Layton, though the members of his own family had heard them for the twentieth time, yet every repetition excited the same merriment as at first. Aunt Ruthy always said, "Don't, brother, you will kill me," but brother did not stop, while Aunt Ruthy did not die.

Mr. Layton related stories of his college life and also of what he had read, calculated to awaken interest and curiosity in his youthful listeners, who regarded their new teacher as a person of great wisdom.

"Yes," said they, "he was n't a bit proud." This information was soon circulated throughout the school and district, until all agreed it was better to have a master who knew something, if he did come from a college. They had the idea that a student would be unapproachable, on account of his cold and dignified manner.

The next boarding place was at Mr. Cutler's, whose worthy help-mate was reputed the most particular

housekeeper in town. Everything that could bear soap and sand was scoured. Her delight was in cleaning, and no paint could secure a foothold on floors, walls, doors, or window frames, on account of her scrubbing. The kitchen table was as white as soap and sand could make it, and even the chairs in common use took their weekly bath on washing days, which were invariably Mondays, in fair weather or foul, sickness or health. The pewter plates not used, but kept as heirlooms, the tins, enough to stock a peddler's cart, the wooden bowls, trays, pewter and silver spoons, pots and kettles, were all subjected to the periodical scrubbing and cleaning. The floors were scoured so vigorously that it was necessary to repair them every few years. Though rugs were used, carpets were almost unknown in the rural districts.

Never a fly, spider, or cricket ventured on the premises of Mrs. Cutler, save in one instance where an impertinent blue-bottle, more audacious than his fellows, ventured within this paradise of cleanliness; but he soon came to grief, for the sharp eyes of the mistress espied him and, towel in hand, pursued the intruder from kitchen to pantry, from pantry to bedroom, and from bedroom to attic, until the poor persecuted fly succeeded in making his escape with the loss of a part of his wings. By some secret power, the thorough housekeeper had brought all the inmates of her dwelling into sympathy with her ruling passion.

The cat was never allowed to run after her tail for fear of "raising a dust," and was compelled to eat her mouse in the shed; the dog seldom ventured inside the door, and then only in pleasant weather, and after wiping his feet on the door mat. Even the pig kept his pen in better condition than is usual with his species. Mr. Cutler's frock and shoes for barn wear were always left in the shed, and the cows were brushed and curried with scrupulous care before milking, lest a loose hair might fall into the pail. The barn floor was swept every day, and people said it was often washed.

Every article of clothing which could be cleansed was submitted to this operation, even the bed quilts, originally white, became more so, while some of other colors faded entirely by constant bleaching. The children, comprising three daughters, an only son having died in infancy, were brought up under this régime. Polly McClure, the general news depositary, said, "*Mis'* Cutler killed her boy by too much washing. It was n't the natur' of boys to be clean; they could n't stand it like girls," and cited her own children as proof of the assertion. Layton found everything faultlessly clean, but he felt ill at ease, and was glad when this term of boarding had expired.

If the order and neatness at the Cutlers' gave him a feeling of constraint, the want of these qualities at the Pages', his next boarding place, greatly annoyed him.

Caleb Page was a poor man, had always been one, and without doubt would die a poor man. He was more than this, — he was what Yankees call "shiftless." He had little energy, and less disposition to work, but he had what is sometimes called a poor man's blessing, — children. There were ten, besides a destitute orphan boy taken to his humble home out of pity, to provide for, with only the assistance of a discouraged wife. A small farm, unpaid for, and a large part of it not yet redeemed from its primeval state, meagrely stocked and scantily provided with farming implements, could not, with the most diligent labor, afford very liberal support. What, then, could be expected of a farmer like Page? During several months of the year the father and his eldest son endeavored to gain a meagre livelihood by working for the neighbors, a day here and a few hours there, as opportunity presented, much to the neglect of his own farm. A poor unfurnished house, a dilapidated barn, fences falling to pieces, weeds and bushes choking the scanty crops, denoted the character of the farming.

Page, however, was a kind man, always ready to perform a neighborly act. His acquaintances pitied him, though he was to blame for his want of success, and they assisted him to finish his haying and gather his late crops to save them from the frost.

The neighbors were aware that Page would find it difficult to provide respectable accommodations for boarding the teacher, therefore they sent contribu-

tions from their larders and linen closets to supply any deficiencies that might exist. Mr. Walton had sent a large sparerib, and Mrs. Page was roasting it before the open fire when Layton returned from school. This operation was performed by tying a strong cord to a beam at the top of the unfinished room and then attaching the cord to the rib, leaving it free to turn, thus presenting each side to the fire, while beneath was placed a pan to receive the drippings.

The young Pages were the most unruly children of the neighborhood, and about as cultivated in manners as wild Indians. Neither parent could or did control them, but if chidings and threatenings could have done it they would have been the most orderly children in the town. The presence of company was the hey-day of their enjoyments, when they took special pains to display their manners, to the chagrin of their parents. As soon as the half dozen children returned from school they began their predatory excursions in quest of something to satisfy their insatiate appetites. They were familiar with every hiding-place on the premises, and it was futile to attempt eluding their keen search; all that could be expected was to gain time by changing the object of their search from one place to another.

Their mother had received from one of the neighbors a panful of doughnuts and supposed she had concealed them for supper, but she was deceived, for

her plan was discovered and a general raid transferred them to the stomachs and pockets of the marauders, and when Mrs. Page went for her cakes for supper, she found only a small plateful.

One of the boys, generally the ringleader in mischief, was named Marquis De Lafayette, in honor of the distinguished nobleman, his parents supposing Marquis to be a name. Supper was finally ready, and it was decided that only the two oldest children should sit at the table with the rest of the family. This was an innovation of the rights of some of the other members, and to show proper resentment they assembled to a chamber and held a council. This apartment extended over all the lower rooms, but was unfinished, having a floor of loose boards with wide openings between. While the family and their guest were at supper, there was a noise of battle overhead accompanied by a shower of dust and cobwebs caused by racing over the loose floor, led on by the Marquis. The parents, at first, took no apparent notice of the uproar, hoping by making some concessions to gain quietness, but their forbearance only emboldened the young rebels, who, looking through the openings in the floor, made remarks about the scenes below.

"I say, Joe, they 'll eat up all the supper. We sha'n't get a bite," said the Marquis. "There goes the last piece of pie," responded Joe, his eyes filling with tears. Joe Rockway was the orphan, and better known for his excellent appetite than for his sense or

his activity. Whenever he was sent to a neighbor's house on an errand he always waited until he had received something to eat, and often a messenger was dispatched to hasten his sluggish pace homeward.

Mr. Layton supposed there would be a family discussion after supper, and excused his absence for a few hours on an errand to Mr. Walton's. The scene did occur, though not precisely as he expected. As soon as he had left, Mr. Page ascended where the young culprits had collected, and with the view of holding a parley, but not to chastise the offenders. Understanding his motives, they quickly scattered, some making their way down the ladder, others climbing into places impossible to be reached, while the Marquis, assuming a defiant attitude, backed off from the floor where a board was wanting, and fell into the kitchen below, when his cries brought the whole household to the scene. There was a large wound in his cheek, otherwise he was not much injured, but the accident made no salutary impression on him or his associates.

"Well, Mr. Layton, how did you like at Page's?"

"I hope you will not urge me to give an answer. I have been there but a short time. I think, however, they are a pretty lively family, using the term in a peculiar sense."

"I am afraid you will not be comfortable there," said Aunt Jenny. "You better stay here to-night."

"I am greatly obliged to you for your thoughtful

kindness, Mrs. Walton, but I fear Mrs. Page would feel injured if I did not return. I can endure it one or two nights, at least."

"Let 's see! To-night is Thursday. You can pass it with them and, perhaps, to-morrow pass the night with us. Saturday afternoon there is no school, and as you spend the Sabbath with the Doctor, you will have a good excuse for not returning," said Mr. Walton.

The plan was adopted, and Mr. Layton returned to the Pages' before bedtime and found, much to his satisfaction, that all the younger members of the family had retired to rest. There were two rooms on the ground floor, a large kitchen occupying one side of the house and a bedroom the other, with a chimney between. There was one large bed, and under it what was called a "trundle bed," for the younger children. Two beds occupied the other room, and one was in the chamber. As there were so many to accommodate, there had been considerable planning, changing, and dividing to furnish a bed for the teacher alone, but it had been brought about by putting an additional child into the trundle bed, another in the mother's, and two at the head and two at the foot of another bed.

Mr. Layton slept soundly, except being occasionally aroused by noises from the other end of the room, sometimes from a stifled titter, and sometimes a suppressed sob from an occupant who had been pinched

or crowded with too much vigor. At length the two days came to an end. Mr. Layton thought he could appreciate the blessings of a pleasant home and well-behaved children as never before.

CHAPTER VIII.

OLD-FASHIONED HOSPITALITY.

"Her kerchief color'd and her apron check,
On household cares intent, with many a sigh
She turns the pancake, and she moulds the pie;
Melts into sauces rich the savory fruit;
From the crush'd berry strains the lucid jam;
While still responsive to each mournful moan,
The saucepan simmers in a softer tone."

THE quiet, simple, domestic manners which distinguished New England country homes half a century ago, are gradually disappearing before the progress of modern improvements that have brought city and country into closer proximity. The customs and fashions of the town are, to a greater or less extent, understood and adopted throughout the quiet villages of New England; whether for good or evil, is a question, and it would be well for city-bred people who sneer at rustic manners to visit some of the country towns before calling the inhabitants "rude" or "barbarous." It is true they will find verdant hills, lofty mountains, dense forests, and other works of nature, but not always unpolished manners or ignorance, and if there is less conventionalism, there is more sincerity, simplicity, and cordiality. If the country would adopt from the city only what is worthy of imitation,

the constant and easy communication between the two regions would be productive of good to both, but it is to be regretted, that the cities, to some extent, entail their vices and follies upon their too susceptible neighbors, and while the former gain many advantages, the latter sustains many injuries, but at the same time some desirable advantages.

The spinning-wheel and loom have been exchanged for the piano; the home-spun garments for the more luxurious fabrics of foreign manufacture; the white, uncovered floors are now carpeted by either foreign or home manufactured coverings; the old-fashioned chairs and stools, for sofas, lounges, and easy chairs; the pewter plates, spoons, brown earthen mugs and pitchers for silver spoons and knives, china, glass, and other more costly wares. Similar changes have been made in the articles of food. Modern palates could not possibly relish the old-fashioned dishes our grandmothers prepared. Who would think of living on brown bread, hasty pudding, beans and pork, or sip unsugared Bohea tea?

The changes between the past and the present are, perhaps, more noticeable in the home education of the young. The rigid discipline of our grandparents has given place to the more liberal privileges of modern youth, and so rapid has been the progress of the pupils in domestic education that many of them have far surpassed their parents in the difficult art of governing, and feel they are fully competent of assuming the

reins themselves. Some of these innovations may be desirable, and to be preferred to the stricter management of our ancestors, but the question arises, Have all these changes added to our virtues and happiness? Is that delicate young lady reclining upon the sofa, with a sensational novel in her hand, better qualified for the duties of wife and mother, than her vigorous grandmother who, in her youth, labored at the spinning-wheel, milked the cows, churned the butter, and made cheese?

Are the sons of New England better fitted at the present day for honest and industrious citizens, successful men of business, and patriotic supporters of our institutions, by indulging in youthful follies and extravagance, casting off all parental authority, and indulging in all the excesses of city life long before their moral principles are so firmly established as to render it safe for them to leave their paternal homes? Many country youth are impatient to forsake the quiet homes of their fathers for more exciting scenes in the city, some in the pursuit of pleasure, others for fame and wealth, but many, alas, end their career in crime and ruin. It is a common thing for the father of a large family to see one after another of his sons, upon whom he had depended for support in his old age, forsaking him, even his beloved Benjamin leaving him to finish his pilgrimage alone.

The events of this story occurred half a century or more ago, before any marked changes in the man-

ners and customs of country life had been made. It was true one could perceive their advance, but it was gradual, and the inhabitants were slow to adopt new fashions, preferring those of their ancestors.

"An old-fashioned fire-place," said an aged grandmother. "What a crowd of pleasant recollections cluster around it! My recollection carries me back to the period of childhood, when parents and children, brothers and sisters, were grouped around its cheerful hearth. How we loved to gaze, by the hour together, into the blazing fire, giving the reins to our fancy, and trace the pictures of houses, churches, trees, men, and animals, constantly springing into existence, and then disappearing like the dissolving views of a stereopticon, or assuming new forms like those of a kaleidoscope, until we had thought out many little stories from these passing images."

An interesting group gathered around the ample fire-place of the Waltons on a cold December evening, a few days before Christmas. The kitchen was a large room, lighted by three windows, and it was here the family assembled, except when company was present. The logs of wood placed upon the massive andirons were enveloped in a blaze, and volumes of smoke and flame went rushing up the chimney, causing the lid on an iron pot suspended from a crane to dance up and down to the music of the escaping steam. In front of the fire sat the master of the household, with his chair tilted back and his

hands clasped behind his head, gazing at the scene, apparently absorbed in his own reflections. His broad shoulders indicated great strength; his large head was partially covered with gray locks that had been gathered and tied with a ribbon above his square forehead. Every Sabbath morning this braid was unbound, combed, and readjusted by his wife as a duty she owed her kind husband.

Aunt Jenny, with her checked apron and white cap and her plump, good-humored face, sat near her spouse, with her knitting, for she found employment in preparing socks and mittens for her family during the long winter evenings. John Walton occupied a settee with a high back, and was trying to solve a problem in arithmetic which had been proposed to the scholars by Mr. Layton. Harry lay stretched beside his brother, intently gazing into the fire, or reading "Robinson Crusoe," while Arthur was playing with Lion and Tom, the dog and the cat. These members of the household were usually on good terms with one another, but sometimes Arthur succeeded in urging on the mastiff to transgress the rules of good breeding which puss always resented, and as might be expected a quarrel ensued.

The cat and dog had been lying side by side with genuine good feeling, until the latter, aroused by Arthur's repeated "Seek him," began to play so roughly with his companion, that Tom felt insulted, and bounded to the top of a high chest of drawers,

his back and tail bristling with anger. This only stimulated Lion's eagerness, when he sprang forward barking vociferously, startling the whole circle from the Quaker-like stillness that had reigned for half an hour.

"Down, Lion, down," said Mr. Walton. "Arthur, what have you been about?"

"Lion was barking at Tom," demurely replied the young rogue.

"Yes, but you set him on," replied his father.

Quiet was soon restored, and each one was busied as before. Mr. Walton resumed his meditations; Mrs. Walton, her knitting; John, his mathematical problem; Harry, his "Robinson Crusoe," while Arthur lay on the floor before the fire, to trace out houses, trees, animals, and other objects, on the burning coals.

"Mother," said Mr. Walton, after another half hour's thinking, "the master will be here to board next week, and we must invite the Howards to spend Christmas with us, that he may know there is one educated woman in the district, and a real lady, too."

Mrs. Walton understood her husband's humor too well to feel piqued at this remark, which was not intended for any reflection upon herself, and she had the good sense to see and acknowledge that Mrs. Howard's education was superior to her own.

"I shall be very happy to have them come," said his wife, "and I will try to make them enjoy themselves. They must be very lonesome at the Cottage."

"O, do have them come," said Henry and Arthur at once, the one throwing down his book, and the other jumping up and dancing about the room in high glee. John, the student, was again interrupted, and looked up half vexed and half wondering at the sudden uproar.

"Mother, mother, won't you make some Christmas pies, — one for me, one for Anna, and one for Lillie? Then we 'll be like

> "'Little Jackey Horner, sitting in the corner,
> Eating Christmas pie.'"

"I believe the boy is crazy to-night," said his mother.

"Only boiling over with a little fun," replied the father, drawing his pet towards him, and inquiring which of the Howards he liked best.

"Lillie," was the artless reply.

"A pretty pair of rogues you would make. Which is your favorite, Henry? Though I need not ask you that question, since none of us are allowed to do anything for Mrs. Howard but yourself. I presume you will claim the honor of giving the invitation and bringing the guests, so you can manage the business to suit yourself."

Nothing could have pleased the lad better than this permission, and he only replied by exhibiting his pleasure in his countenance and bearing. He was always gratified when any one placed confidence in his judgment and fidelity.

John, who had taken no part in the conversation, kept busy at his task for another half hour, when suddenly rising from his corner, he said: —

"I've got it! I've got it!"

"Got what, my son?"

"Why, the answer to my 'sum.' I wonder whether William Allen has done it. If *he* has n't, I don't think any other scholar has. Mr. Layton said he would give us a problem not in the arithmetic when we had finished this one. I guess it will be a pretty hard one, for he likes to make us work, and I'm glad of it."

The next day busy preparations were going on at the farm house of the Waltons in the culinary department. Meat for pies was "minced," apples and pumpkins were stewed, and other things were attended to which an experienced and skilful housekeeper understands. Aunt Jenny, the presiding genius of the kitchen, with her neat cap, clean, white apron reaching from her chin to the bottom of her gown, and with sleeves rolled up to her elbows, was busy rolling out pastry, while Arthur stood at her side asking questions, and examining every article within his reach, until he espied a bowl of raisins, which was too great a temptation to resist, therefore he helped himself liberally, then asked permission to do so. His mother, at length wearied by his conduct, raised her hand as if to give the culprit a box on the ear, when he slipped from beneath her uplifted arm and

glided across the room, saying, "You can't catch me, mother."

Towards evening, Mr. Walton came with the headless bodies of a goose, a turkey, and four plump chickens, to be dressed for boiling or roasting. "Mother," a pet name he often gave his wife, "where shall I place these fowls?"

"Leave them in the shed, and after supper you and John may dress them, as I have so many other things to attend to." She was just giving the finishing touch, with a key, to her mince pies.

The fire in the large brick oven had burned down to a bed of glowing coals, and Mr. Walton began to remove them with a long iron shovel, first crowding them to one side of the oven with a stout pole. When the fire had all been removed, the brick floor was swept with a wet birch broom to remove the ashes before the pies were placed under the arched roof. Just as the last one had disappeared, Henry came from school, his cheeks glowing with the cold, and eagerly inquired when supper would be ready. "For all the boys are going to have a coast down Butternut hill, and I want to be there early."

"Supper will not be ready for some time, my son. Is it not best to go and do the chores at Mrs. Howard's first?" A look of disappointment passed over his countenance, and for a moment he regretted he had undertaken to perform these tasks, but he soon mastered his selfish feelings and started for Glen

Cottage with a merry whistle and a sense of pleasure. Who could blame a young lad like him, keenly relishing the sports of boyhood, if he did feel impatient of delay, and finish, somewhat hurriedly, his usually well performed task? The cow, that evening, did not yield her usual quantity of milk, and Fleety did not receive her extra currying, but there was little to complain of, since at other times, every duty had been conscientiously performed. Mrs. Howard was somewhat surprised to see her young friend almost out of sight before she had thought of his having finished his work.

Many years ago Christmas was not generally observed in New England, and in many of the country towns the day was not even remembered. Mr. Walton's grandfather emigrated from England, and he still retained his attachment to some of the English customs; among these was the observance of Christmas, though in his family it could hardly be called a holiday, as the regular business was not interrupted, and its observance was almost wholly confined to extra preparations for dinner, generally enlivened by the presence of neighbors as guests. Sometimes a large company would be gathered at these social entertainments, but on the present occasion, from respect to the feelings of Mrs. Howard, no one except Mr. Layton, Dr. Clive and family, and the new minister, Mr. Goodell and wife, was expected to be present.

The Doctor was invited to bring Alice Bradford, his niece, and his young daughter as a companion for the Howard children. Dr. Clive was early left a widower, with an infant daughter whose likeness to her mother rendered her very dear to him. Lucy was at this time six years old, a beautiful but impulsive child with a strong will. Though a very fond parent, his management of the motherless girl was judicious. Her education thus far had almost entirely been neglected, but now her parent decided that special attention should be given to it. Alice had made some attempts to instruct her young cousin, but Lucy's wayward disposition made it impossible for her to control the child, and she was left to have her own way. The danger to his daughter led her father to take some measures to counteract it, therefore he resolved to send her from home if he could find some judicious teacher who would assume the responsibility of the task.

CHAPTER IX.

PREJUDICES YIELDING.

"Experience teaches many things, and all men are scholars,
Yet is he a strange tutor unteaching what he hath taught."

ALL the preparations for company had been completed, the two square rooms, called the East and the West rooms, were warmed by cheerful fires which had been burning since day-light (one of these apartments was for adults, the other for children), when Henry Walton arrived at an early hour, with a sleigh full of guests from Glen Cottage, covered with cloaks, hoods, and shawls, for though the day was pleasant, the cold was intense. These human bundles, so carefully wrapped, were taken from the sleigh by Mr. Walton, and handed over to Aunt Jenny who stood in the doorway ready to receive her friends with a warm shake of the hand and a welcome greeting. With the thoughtful kindness natural to her, she conducted her guests into the East room, as Mr. Howard died in the other. His widow had never been at the house since she left it with the lifeless form of her husband, therefore this occasion was a trying one to her. She had anticipated this, and schooled her heart to meet the trial, and instead of resigning herself to her inex-

pressible grief, she resolved to perform her social duties as well as she could under the circumstances.

About eleven o'clock Dr. Clive, with Alice and Lucy, and Mr. and Mrs. Goodell arrived. The Doctor left his companions and went about a mile further, to visit a child of one of the neighbors, who was ill with a fever.

Mr. Goodell had been only a few weeks in town, and this was his first visit to the Waltons, though he had been in the neighborhood once before to officiate at Mr. Howard's funeral. On first coming to Jefferson he became acquainted with Mr. Walton, and regarded him with respect for his manly qualities; this feeling was reciprocated, and the country parson and the country farmer became very firm friends.

Mrs. Goodell, previous to her marriage, had lived in a large town of another State, therefore simple country manners and customs were distasteful to her. Mr. Goodell had been the pastor of a country church in another parish for three years, yet she had not become reconciled to the change in her position, from a city belle to a country pastor's wife. She regarded the inhabitants of her husband's parish as wanting in culture and refinement, and yielding to these prejudices she had kept aloof from society, which prevented her from understanding the real character of the people. When her husband asked her to accompany him t
the Waltons she gave a toss to her auburn curls, a
made an impatient gesture with her delicate
saying, rather pettishly: —

"How stupid it will be to spend a whole day with these country farmers. I really don't know what to say to them that they can understand. I don't know anything about spinning, weaving, or making butter and cheese."

"Would it not be well, my dear, to interest yourself in such duties, by inquiring of the farmers' wives how they are done? As we are to live among them, it is our duty to become interested in their pursuits. I think you will not find the people as stupid and ignorant as you imagine."

"You don't expect me to turn spinner and dairy-woman, do you? But if I must accept every invitation to visit, I may as well make a business of it and think of nothing else, so you may get me a pair of cow-hide shoes and a home-made linen dress, so as not to surprise your parishioners by any richer fabrics."

"Caroline," said Mr. Goodell, with a stern, injured air, "when I asked you to accept my hand, did I not tell you that your position would be a responsible one, requiring great self-denial? And did you not express your willingness to resign your circle of friends, your round of pleasures, and be contented to live in the country? By keeping aloof from the people of my flock, you greatly injure *my* usefulness, to say nothing f your own, and will cause them to forsake us."

Mrs. Goodell, though generally indulged in her es, had learned that when her husband decided course to be pursued, she was expected to com-

ply, and in this instance, judging by his compressed lips and steady eye, it would not be judicious to oppose his wishes, so she consented to accompany him. During the ride he entertained his wife by descriptions of the town, and then of some of the inhabitants, including the Waltons and the Howards When he mentioned Mrs. Howard as a refined, well-educated lady, who had lived on a farm, performed her own household duties, and was educating her children herself, Mrs. Goodell looked at him with incredulous surprise, as if his statements were exaggerated, or that he had mistaken the nature of refinement. His representations not only stimulated her curiosity, but also awakened a spirit of criticism. Very different were the feelings of the Waltons towards the pastor and his wife, both of whom they regarded with kindness, and the minister with reverence.

Mrs. Walton's first care was to attend to the physical comfort of her guests, by making her house as attractive as possible, and furnishing her table with an abundance of nourishing food. That part of the entertainment belonged for her to provide, but for the intellectual festivity she must depend upon her friends. She felt sure that Mrs. Layton and Mrs. Howard would do their part, and even her husband could converse upon subjects of which she was ignorant. The hostess, whose heart was always open to the kindest feelings, was never happier than when trying to make others

happy; her face was smiling and her voice sweet and winning. Dressed in a neat but simple manner, she appeared on this occasion as the type of a model housewife, the ruling spirit of a happy home.

The snow had been removed from the front yard and a path made for the guests; everything was in readiness, even to placing the most comfortable chairs before the fire, when Dr. Clive and his party arrived. Both the host and hostess advanced to welcome their friends, and after giving the Doctor and Mr. Goodell a cordial shake of the hand, Mr. Walton, without waiting for a formal introduction, offered the same reception to Mrs. Goodell, but she drew back a little, with something of a stately air, as if unwilling to return the greeting, when her husband, noticing the act, stepped forward and gave her a formal introduction to both Mr. and Mrs. Walton, but the incident caused a little constraint upon the parties for some time. Mrs. Howard's self-possession placed her above such annoyances, while her lady-like dignity checked even Mrs. Goodell's assumptions. The minister's wife had received every attention from the hostess, who assisted her to remove her wraps, and then conducted her to a comfortable seat by the fire, and placed a soft rug for her feet to rest on. After the usual remarks about the weather, and inquiries after the health of the family, Mrs. Goodell furtively cast her eyes about the room to observe its appearance.

So far as neatness was concerned, from attic to

cellar there was nothing to offend the most fastidious house-keeper; besides this essential quality, there were genuine comfort and cheerfulness. The room in which the company assembled was like the one opposite, and was furnished in a similar manner. They were large, with the walls wainscoated to the window seats, but the upper part was covered with plaster, though neither painted nor papered. The large fire-place was enclosed by an oak frame with a mantel-piece on which were placed four bright brass candle-sticks, with fresh candles, and beside them a tray and snuffers, and a pair of china vases for holding paper candle-lighters. Brass andirons, a shovel and tongs with brass heads, adorned the hearth and jambs. The floor, white as sand could make it, was partially covered with rugs of various styles, made by Mrs. Walton's diligent hands.

In one corner stood a bed like a downy pyramid, ready to smother any one who should have the temerity to plunge into its yielding mass, with its snowy sheets, pillows, and variegated patchwork quilt, also the work of its owner. The four windows were draped in curtains of white linen, with fringed borders. In another place stood a chest of drawers made of solid mahogany, with brass handles on the drawers, and looking so ponderous that one would almost as soon think of moving a pyramid, as such a piece of furniture, without assistance. A mahogany table, over which hung a looking-glass, ornamented with a gilt spread eagle, a

clock with brass balls, common chairs and a rocking-chair, completed the furniture of the room.

There was more to command Mrs. Goodell's respect than to excite her contempt, and before she was aware of it, her prejudices began to yield, notwithstanding the absence of wall paper and carpets. Still, she thought that people who displayed so much mahogany must have seen more of the world than could be found in a small country town, and her respect for the owners rose accordingly. Mrs. Walton's father had been an independent farmer in the oldest State of New England, and had given his only daughter, upon her marriage, what was called a "good setting out," so that few persons in the town to which she removed could boast of as much valuable furniture as Jenny Walton. Her husband's father had also assisted his son in buying and stocking his farm, so that, having a fair start, after twenty-five years of hard labor and prudence, he was not only independent, but was considered in times when there were no "millionaires" as wealthy. Yet this worthy couple had passed through great afflictions, for death had visited their home and taken two early blossoms from the family circle, though three were left to bless their old age.

Dinner, which was at other times served precisely at twelve o'clock, was deferred half an hour for Mr. Layton. The children were watching for John and Henry, when Arthur bounded from the room, exclaiming, "They've come. Here's Henry!" Eager and

excited he dashed past his brother, to communicate the intelligence to his mother, stepping on Lion's tail, which sent the dog howling under the "settle" or settee.

"Where 's mother?" was his first inquiry when he had recovered his breath. Mrs. Walton had just entered the room to receive Mr. Layton, who had been so boisterously announced by Arthur.

"What 's the matter, my son; what has happened?"

"Why, nothing, mother, only Mr. Layton 's coming, and I ran ahead to tell you."

"Is that all? You are a foolish boy to make all this stir about what I knew before. Where did you leave your company, when you ran away from them?"

"By the 'swelled tree,' in Day's Woods. I should think they were at Bell Brook by this time, and will be here in a few minutes."

About ten minutes, however, passed before Mr. Layton and John Walton appeared, earnestly engaged in solving a question in arithmetic. Finally the whole company assembled, and were seated around the table, liberally supplied with tempting viands. The conversation, which before had been rather formal and reserved, now became easy and natural. Topics of general interest, in which all could join, were introduced, and the dinner hour passed very swiftly and pleasantly. Mrs. Goodell's respect for the guests and their entertainers rose still higher. She admired Mrs. Walton's cookery and household arrangements, her

common sense and instinctive politeness; the frankness and hospitality of Mr. Walton, and the modest, respectful behavior of the children. Mrs. Howard's gentleness and intelligence won her esteem, and Mr. Layton's gentle, manly bearing quite fascinated her.

The children were busy at their play in another room, while their elders were served, but after a time they became weary and hungry, and began to show symptoms of impatience. If this had not occurred, their fast might have been prolonged late into the afternoon. Lillie, being the youngest and less acquainted with social forms, came quietly to her mother's side and said, "Me want a piece of pie." Mrs. Howard looked embarrassed and said in a low tone, "Lillie must be quiet and wait a while." But the importunate little pleader was not to be put off; her repeated request was heard by Mr. Walton, who remarked, "I think we wrong the little ones; it is time that we gave place to them," at the same time rising from the table, a movement in which all joined, and their places were supplied by a group of little ones. Anna and Lucy, who had become firm friends, were placed side by side; Arthur sat near Lillie, while Henry who had acted as master of their sports now assisted in doing the honors of a host, and Aunt Jenny loaded their plates with twice as much as they could eat. The younger portion of the company finished their meal in less than half the time required by their superiors, since they did not attend to "a

feast of reason," but only to the demands of the appetite. Mr. Goodell engaged in conversation with Mr. Layton, at first, upon the subject of college life, the clergyman having graduated at the same institution of which his friend was a member. Several anecdotes, current among the students, of tricks played upon one another, were told with as much zest as if for the first time. The conversation of these two gentlemen soon attracted other listeners, until the whole company became interested and joined in the laugh.

After some time had been spent in this manner, the topics of conversation became more grave. Mr. Goodell asked Mr. Layton what profession he intended to follow.

"That of teaching," replied the latter.

"And what are your reasons for such a choice?"

"Duty and inclination," replied the student. "I feel my deficiencies, but wish to qualify myself thoroughly for my work. There is need of a better educated class of teachers for our public schools, and until the demand is supplied, we cannot expect to see the standard of literary and moral culture in our country higher than now. Judging from my limited experience, I believe well educated, well disciplined teachers, especially in the country schools, are scarce."

"You do not consider it your duty to hide your talents in a small district school, for a small salary?" said Mr. Goodell.

"I do not claim to be so unselfish as that," replied

his friend; "but I am willing to teach such schools as I can get, during my college course, for two reasons: first, the small pecuniary assistance which I need to carry me through college; second, the experience I may gain; besides, I hope some good may follow my humble efforts. If I succeed in my calling, I expect to secure a permanent situation in a school of a higher grade."

"Your motives are highly commendable, but I confess that the profession has few charms for me, and when obliged to assume its duties during my college vacations I did so from necessity alone, and not from any love for the work."

Turning to Mrs. Howard, who sat near to him, Mr. Layton said: —

"My young friend, Henry Walton, informs me that you have been a teacher, or, rather, that you are now, since you instruct your own children. We should like your opinion on the subject."

"Thank you, Mr. Layton. I have acted in that capacity, and found the employment a pleasant one."

"And very successful too," said Dr. Clive, "judging from the pupils playing yonder. That oldest one of yours has been relating stories from 'Pilgrim's Progress' to my little Ignoramus who, I believe, regards your child as the Goddess of Wisdom."

"You must ascribe that habit of Anna's to circumstances, rather than to any superior talent in the child or her teacher," said the mother. "We have

lived so retired that almost her only companions have been those of her own family, consequently she appears older than most children of her age. This is a circumstance I regret, and wish she had the opportunity of associating more with younger persons." This remark encouraged the Doctor to ask Mrs. Howard to admit Lucy as a pupil into her family, and he only waited for a convenient opportunity to make known his plan.

Mrs. Howard made some inquiries of Mr. Layton regarding his school, whether it was pleasant, and what encouragement he met with.

"I am happy in my work, but regret the absence of any well-arranged system. I have endeavored to introduce something of the kind, but the term is so short I cannot expect to see any great result; I hope, however, to raise a higher public sentiment in the school, and awaken a love of study."

"Have you a pupil by the name of John McClure?" inquired Dr. Clive.

"Yes, the boys call him 'Curly Jack,' on account of a profusion of black curly hair, I presume. He is a bright boy, and shows a very eager desire for knowledge."

"He is the brother of a little patient of mine, and seems so much interested in his books and his school that I have great hopes of him. He thinks Master Layton is the perfection of pedagogues, and I dare say he would go to the stake for him."

"I am happy to know I have so ardent a friend, and hope I shall deserve such devotion."

The name McClure attracted Mrs Walton's attention, and she inquired for the little invalid, who had almost been forgotten in her family cares. The Doctor said, "The little fellow is very ill, but if he had proper care, and the ordinary comforts of a sick room, I believe he might be spared, but his mother does not know what is proper for a sick child, and I fear her indiscreet management will render all my efforts useless. I should think the family is destitute of the comforts, if not the necessaries of life."

"Wife, how is this? Have you been to see the child?" said Mr. Walton.

"Other cares have prevented me from visiting the family, but I will go to-morrow and carry them something for their comfort."

Mrs. Howard offered to accompany her to the McClures, and the offer was accepted, therefore it was arranged that Henry should drive the ladies there the next day, as the sleighing had become easy.

CHAPTER X.

THE McCLURES.

"All kinds of arts are practised, bad and good,
All kinds of ways to gain a livelihood."

THE next morning, after her own household duties had been performed, Aunt Jenny filled a large basket with a variety of substantial food for the well ones, and delicacies for the invalid, then tied up a bundle of clothing and bed linen, so necessary for the comfort of the sick. She then told Henry to take old Pete and bring Mrs. Howard, and by that time she should be ready.

Mrs. Walton's religion was one of deeds as well as words, though she did not think lightly of the forms and institutions of Christianity, for she cherished them with reverence and was careful in their observance, but like its great Founder, she manifested her principles in her actions. It was only for her to know that a kind word or a charitable deed was needed, and the word or the deed was quickly bestowed. Her benevolence was the outcome of firm Christian principles engrafted upon a naturally kind and genial nature.

Henry brought out the best sleigh, which was painted red and yellow, with an imposing dasher, and

L. of C.

put on old Pete the silver-mounted harness, used for Sunday, and a string of a dozen fine-toned bells, and with the best whip and buffalo robes, prepared to take his mother and Mrs. Howard to the McClures. Mrs. Walton, on seeing the preparations he had made, said,

"My son, why did you take the best sleigh and harness? We are only going to call upon a neighbor who will not mind how we come."

"Because I did n't want to go in the old 'cutter.'"

"Why not? You ride in it almost every day."

"Yes, mother, but Mrs. Howard is going with us to-day, and I should like to appear respectable."

"The boy is right," said his father, who had been listening to the colloquy between him and his mother. "Always take the best when you wait upon the ladies."

Pete, sharing his young master's pride, did his best to display some of his antics, and trotted away very gingerly, with a few affected starts at a stump or rock by the way, tossing his head at regular moments, which greatly increased the music of the bells.

The dwelling of John McClure was about one mile and a half from Walton's, at the foot of a low mountain range covered with a dense forest, extending to the very edge of a little potato patch in the rear of the house. The small clearing made in this thick wood several years before had widened very gradually, until a little farm had been cleared of its standing timber, but further improvements had scarcely been

attempted, since the occupant was too indolent to improve the land by much cultivation. A rude cabin had been built, which served as a shelter for his rapidly increasing family, without any regard to comfort, beyond what was absolutely necessary for the protection of the inmates. Here the family had lived, or rather burrowed, for more than a dozen years. A little patch of potatoes, an acre of stunted corn, a field of half matured rye, some withered garden vegetables, constituted the principal harvest of a farm naturally productive, and easily cultivated; but after sowing and planting everything was left to Nature, and she was slow to encourage the indolent by bestowing a rich harvest. The consequence was, the products of the farm were insufficient to support a large family, but the deficiency was partly met by the adroit management of Polly McClure, who was known throughout the town for the skill and success of her begging expeditions.

While her husband was dozing on a fine day she would take her infant, for she always had one, and begin her pedestrian tour of begging, sometimes walking seven or eight miles in the hot sun, but usually returning with a good supply of clothing, tea, sugar, and butter, besides other articles of food, when she would supply a feast for her family as long as her stores lasted, and then followed another diet of potatoes, corn-cake and rye coffee without sugar.

The household arrangements of the McClures were

in keeping with their farming system, and the inside of their hovel displayed the same indifference to comfort and cleanliness as the exterior. The premises about the house, usually called the "door yard," though not inclosed either by a wall or fence, were encumbered with chips, straggling branches of scraggy brushwood, decayed stumps of trees, pine knots, pieces of hemlock bark, and other combustibles, the most easily obtained, for a good snug woodpile was never seen at the door of John McClure, and in matter of fuel, as in food, he lived "from hand to mouth." During summer, instead of flowers and shrubbery, the door-yard exhibited clusters of thistles, solitary stalks of mullen, with here and there a spontaneous sunflower of rank growth, while the inmates within, and those animals living without, were pretty much on an equality. Children, pigs, calves, dogs, hens, and ducks burrowed promiscuously together on this debatable ground, and even the house was accessible to most of them during the day, and though the door was closed at night, some of the fowls secured an early roost on positions inside, such as the beams, secure from Reynard's night attacks. When these feathered creatures had once taken possession, they were left unmolested, and whether from gratitude for such favors, or fear of their superiors, they never practised early cock-crowing.

As soon as Henry, with his party, came near the McClures, they saw half a dozen or more heads in

and about the doorway; but as socn as the sleigh drove up to the house, every child disappeared like a flock of chickens, when the parent hen sounds the note of alarm. Visitors were seldom seen at their home, hence the sudden flight; but as soon as the panic was over, they began to emerge from their hiding-places, eager to see and hear all that was done or said. They surrounded the visitors, and even the more bold of the group ventured to take hold of their shawls, make remarks about their dress, mimic their gestures, and otherwise show their want of proper training. Not the wild Indians on the prairies could have surpassed these children in rudeness of manners.

The ladies were met at the door by the mother of the family: —

"Lor' me, here's *Miss* Walton. I'm proper glad to see you. Do tell, if here ain't *Mis'* Howard, too. Poor thing, her heart's a'most broke for her good man. Dear soul, it was the awfullest thing we ever knowed in our town."

Mrs. Walton stopped her ill-timed reflections by inquiring after her own family, to which she replied with her usual garrulity, for Polly McClure's vocabulary was never stinted: —

"Jimmy's pooty bad off, poor fellow, though the doctor thinks he's better. Here, *Mis'* Howard, take a chair," offering a broken one which appeared hardly able to support the slight form of Mrs. Howard, at

the same time wiping the dust from the seat with her apron; while Aunt Jenny, who was better known in the family, was left to find a more substantial seat on a bench. A bed stood in one corner of the room that served more purposes than for sleeping. Here the father and half a dozen heads which had so mysteriously disappeared were seen huddled together. Some of their owners were barefoot, others wore tattered garments, and all were with uncombed hair and unwashed faces.

"How are you, Mr. McClure?" inquired Mrs. Howard.

"Well, marm," was the blunt reply.

"How are you, Betsey?" addressing the oldest of the group.

She did not venture to reply, but cast a furtive glance at the speaker, and then hid her face behind Curly Jack.

"Sit up and speak to *Mis'* Howard. That's Anna's mother what give ye the pooty bunnet ye wore to school. There, don't act so, she'll never come to see ye agin. Hope you'll think nothin' on't, marm, Betsey's so pesky bashful, she'll never speak to a stranger."

"O, never mind," said Mrs. Howard. "Girls of her age are inclined to bashfulness, which is better than being too bold."

While Mrs. Howard was conversing with Mrs. McClure and the children, Mrs. Walton approached

the cradle in which the little sufferer lay. He was panting for fresh air, nearly smothered under a quilt, and wrapped in a coarse woolen garment that had never been washed. The atmosphere of the room was stifled and impure, which greatly increased the child's sufferings. There were no windows of glass in the house, light being admitted by the door and small windows made of oiled paper, which could not be opened. One door of the apartment, of which there were two, had been divided into upper and lower parts, so when the weather was suitable, the upper one could be thrown open, thus affording the purpose of a window, while the lower part afforded a safe barrier against the intrusion of the domestic animals, and the escape of the children too young to care for themselves.

Mrs. Walton, believing fresh air would relieve the poor sufferer, opened the door a little at first, and placing the cradle in a favorable position, soon perceived a change in the child's respiration. He appeared to be sleeping but soon opened his eyes and extended his hands to be taken from his bed, when Aunt Jenny decided to try the effect of cleanliness, and closing the door, prepared some warm water, and with a clean towel she had brought with her, she gently raised the child, bathed him, and then dressed him in clean garments, and laid him in Mrs. Howard's arms, while she was arranging his uncomfortable bed. The cradle was divested of its unwholesome clothes, fitted up

with a soft pillow and clean coverings, and little Jimmy was placed in it so changed as hardly to be recognized. He looked up and smiled as if grateful for his tender care and improved condition.

While these operations were going on the mother stood by and seemed astonished that fresh air and cleanliness were beneficial to health; indeed, as to the latter, she had supposed there was no lack, and at every sign of improvement, she would exclaim: "Lor' me, du tell; d' ye ever see," and said she believed "Jim would git well right off," and that she should be "forever obleeged to the ladies for fetching them so many good things."

After giving her store of provisions for the family and some directions about the invalid, Mrs. Walton, with Mrs. Howard, left, promising to return and remain with Jimmy that night. As soon as the visitors were gone the group on the bed found use for their limbs and tongues, and began to clamor for the food left by Mrs. Walton.

"You shan't have any now," shouted the mother above the clatter of half a dozen voices.

"I will, too," said one; "I 'm half starved," said another, while a third got hold of the basket and helped himself.

"See Tom, he 's eating up all the victuals," said Betsey, at the same time her hand was reaching out to share the plunder.

Their mother, finding words ineffectual, gave a

stunning box on the ear of each disputant, which sent them shrieking to the other part of the room. Finally, the contest becoming somewhat doubtful, between one parent and half a dozen hungry children, and the fear of losing his share of the spoils, which was generally the lion's share, the hitherto silent father, raising his voice, said, "Hush, every brat of you, or I 'll flog you out of the house."

There was no resisting that command, for they had one and all suffered the effects of their father's temper when aroused, and to incur his displeasure was not desirable, therefore nothing more was necessary to quell the insurrection. The repast was soon ready, which restored quietness to the family for the remainder of the day, and the invalid was allowed to rest quietly, while the judicious care of Aunt Jenny through the night wrought such a change in him, that Dr. Clive, on his visit the next day, pronounced his patient decidedly better, and beyond danger.

CHAPTER XI.

PHANTOMS.

"Ere the evening lamps are lighted,
And like phantoms grim and tall,
Shadows from the fitful firelight
Dance upon the parlor wall;
Then the forms of the departed
Enter at the open door;
The beloved, the true-hearted,
Come to visit me once more;
He, the young and strong, who cherished
Noble longings for the strife,
By the road-side, fell and perished,
Weary with the march of life."

It was Sabbath evening, a precious time, when friends of congenial sympathies love to meet, and when hearts united are more closely bound in tender love by the holy calm of that hallowed day of rest, fit emblem of the eternal Sabbath of heaven. Supper at Glen Cottage had been finished ; the little ones had been tenderly laid to rest, and Mrs. Howard returned to her customary seat by the bright fire, near which was the little table with the Bible and a few other books. She took up a volume and began to read. It happened to be "The Saints' Rest." While her eyes

perceived the form of the words, to her mental vision they were blank. She turned the leaves unconsciously until gradually she lost all sense of the meaning of the words, and surrounding objects had no power over her sight or hearing. Her thoughts were of the past, and she listened to hear the familiar footsteps returning from the circle of daily duties to the peaceful home of his loved ones.

Mrs. Howard observed the arm-chair and beside it the evening slippers, while on the wall hung the hat and coat which had never been removed since last worn. An overpowering sense of the presence of the lost one came to her, which caused her to listen for the well-known voice and its cordial greeting, when her heart beat at the return of the absent one, as formerly. All the incidents of the day came rushing from the storehouse of her memory to be related for his approval and sympathy, and her burdens to be borne by his firm strength, her aspirations to be encouraged, her fidelity to be rewarded, while at the same time she was always ready to listen to his account of hopes blasted or victories won.

These evening hours had been the sweetest of Paulina Howard's married life, and in a few brief moments she lived years, forgetting the present, but sadly the illusion was dispelled, and the recent sad events of her life were brought to her memory and a thrill of anguish pierced her soul. Her distress increased until she was led to exclaim, "My God,

why hast Thou forsaken me?" She rose and walked the room until tears came to her relief. Who has not felt the solace of tears, when the heart seemed bursting with inexpressible emotions? They may have preserved the reason to many afflicted minds agonized by the troubles of life. The flood-gates of her heart had been opened, and her tears continued to flow until gradually she regained her composure and found comfort at the Cross, and, though afflicted, she was submissive, and said, "Not my will but thine be done."

Suffering has an important mission in this life, and no character is perfected without it. If allowed to fulfil its Divine purpose it refines, purifies, and ennobles the character, and teaches one to know himself and estimate earthly objects according to their real value, while it reveals the moral and spiritual life better than worldly prosperity can. Many characters, otherwise excellent, have failed to gain a noble career, for the want of the discipline of suffering. Such thoughts came to the relief of Paulina Howard and afforded her consolation.

Her neighbors, after her great affliction, were very kind and offered their services for whatever she might need them, but she had written to her youngest brother and invited him to make her a visit, which he promised to do in a few weeks. Relying upon his advice in regard to her business affairs, she waited until he should come before making any

changes. A second letter stated that he was obliged to postpone his visit a little while longer, but when he came he would bring their youngest sister to spend the summer with her. This cheerful news encouraged Mrs. Howard who resumed her customary duties quietly waiting the arrival of her beloved friends.

Fanny Sherwood was the youngest of a large family and the pet of all the other members; she was especially dear to her sister Paulina, from whom she had received almost a mother's care during her early childhood. Their father died some years before, and their mother, who still survived, lived with the youngest son at the homestead. All the family, except Fanny, had married and settled in different places, and, though widely separated, they still communicated with one another by letters and occasional visits. These practices kept alive and in vigorous exercise fraternal and filial feelings. To be separated from her relatives had been to Paulina Howard the severest trial of her life until the loss of her husband, therefore the hope of seeing her beloved sister gave her great pleasure, and her children could talk of nothing else but Uncle William and Aunt Fanny.

The domestic cares of the household engrossed the thoughts of Mrs. Howard during the day, but after her family had retired to rest, and she was left alone, she was inclined to yield to the influence of gloomy thoughts. Therefore, after some reflection upon the subject, she decided to arrange a system for

the education of her chiidren. She had read various works on the subject, and as she thought about it she was more impressed with its importance, and the field was much broader than she at first supposed.

Her plan was successful in its operation.

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW PUPIL.

"Out of the midst of childhood,
Steeped in a golden glory,
Came dreamy forms and faces,
Snatches of song and story."

When Dr. Clive once started on any new scheme he did not usually leave it until it was squarely settled. All the minutiæ were arranged by line and plummet, the *pros* and *cons* fairly weighed, the probabilities for success or failure duly measured, while passion and interest were made subservient to reason; hence he made mistakes less frequently than most persons. He had gone through the same process in regard to placing his motherless daughter Lucy under Mrs. Howard's care, and the result of the problem, when solved, was that it would be best both for the child and the Howards.

Having arranged everything to his satisfaction, the Doctor made it in his way to call at the Cottage during one of his professional visits to the neighborhood.

"Mamma, here is Dr. Clive," said Anna, as he drove up to the door

"Has he fetched my papa?" inquired Lillie, who associated her father's death with the Doctor.

"No, darling," answered her mother, "Papa cannot come back to us; we shall go to him by and by."

The Doctor made sure his horse, and then entered the door opened for him.

"Good morning, Mrs. Howard. How are all the little ones to-day?"

"They are all very well, thank you. Take a seat, Doctor," placing a chair before the fire. "A pleasant day."

"Very," was the Doctor's laconic reply.

With his accustomed deliberation, as if afraid of disturbing a nervous patient, he removed his outer garments — mittens, tippet, and coat — then occupied the proffered seat, held his hands to the fire, rubbed them, then warmed them again, looking very thoughtful during these operations.

The children stood by wondering what he would do next. Lillie, who was less timid than the others, drew closer to the Doctor, and placing her little hand upon his knee, and looking anxiously into his face, said, "Where is my papa?"

The Doctor was aroused from his silence by the voice, and looking tenderly upon his young questioner, placed her upon his knee, and gently stroking her head, replied: —

"Lillie's papa has gone to a beautiful city."

"Booful thity," said the child.

"Would you like to ride in my sleigh? O, here is Anna," recognizing her presence for the first time. "Come here and sit on the other knee. There, now we will 'trot, trot to Boston.'"

Lillie forget her question in her merriment, laughed and chatted with her new friend, while Anna, feeling herself too old to sit on the Doctor's knee, hung her head in maidenly bashfulness, and as soon as a convenient opportunity was presented, slid from her seat and glided to the window to watch the sky, the trees, or anything that might interest her.

Turning to Mrs. Howard the Doctor inquired, "How is Willie?"

"He can answer for himself," said his mother, taking him from his cradle.

"Fine boy! He does credit to his careful mother. How do you manage to keep these little ones so quiet and orderly? My Rattlebrains would turn the house topsy-turvy before an hour, once give her the liberty."

"My children," said Mrs. Howard, "are not always as quiet as you now see them. They have their times of noise and ill-humor pretty much as others have."

When once the ice was broken, the Doctor came abruptly to the subject which had occupied his thoughts. He said, "I have a plan to propose, suggested by a remark made at Walton's." He then detailed his scheme of placing his daughter Lucy under her charge, to be instructed with her own children, and expressed the urgent desire that she would

think favorably of the plan, but would wait for an answer after she had considered it.

"Put on the girls' cloaks and let me give them a ride to McClure's, and in the meantime you can think of my plan and let me know your decision when we return."

The "little pitchers" caught the intimation for a ride and were soon on the alert in getting ready.

"Lillie may ride in the middle," said Anna, "'cause she's a little girl," remembering her own position on the Doctor's knee and fearing it might be repeated. The child had always regarded the Doctor with awe, as he had been the family physician ever since her recollection, and associated him with the mysterious power of life and death, and no other individual, except the minister, was regarded with such reverential fear. It would have shocked her sensibilities if any one had even hinted that both were not perfect in their different callings. Her reverence was too profound to allow her to approach either with that confiding love she rendered her mother.

During the absence of the children Mrs. Howard was revolving in her own mind the Doctor's plan. She felt it was a great responsibility; that she might not succeed with Lucy as she had with her own children; whether she could meet the expectations of Lucy's friends, or what might be the influence the child's example would have upon her own daughters. On the other hand, she might prove a suitable com-

panion, and they needed, especially Anna, young associates; besides, the compensation would add to her slender means to educate her family; and, finally, it would divert her own mind from the dreadful blow that had fallen upon her. Looking at the subject in its different bearings, she concluded to try the plan for a time with the understanding that if all parties were not satisfied, Lucy should return to her home.

This arrangement was finally carried into effect, and the little motherless stranger was duly settled in her new home at Glen Cottage. Her father had brought her in the early part of the day that she might have an opportunity of becoming used to the change before night, the time for homesickness. Lucy was quite contented until the shades of evening began to gather, when she became thoughtful, and called to mind her papa, cousin Alice, her "bonny white kitten," her little bed-room close to her father's, and began to cry. Mrs. Howard had expected this, and tried to soothe the child; Anna and Lillie also offered their sympathy.

"I want to go home; I want to see my papa," persisted the child.

"You cannot go home to-night, Lucy," said Mrs. Howard, "you must stay with Anna and Lillie, and after supper we will have some plays."

"I will go home now; I must see my papa; I don't want to play."

"Your papa will come to see you, by and by."

"No, he won't ; I am going home now," at the same time rushing to the door, but she could not open it, and began to kick it most vigorously, at the same time calling loudly for some one to open it. Finally, as her efforts and demands were fruitless, she threw herself upon the floor kicking and striking her head against it, as if determined to make an end of her miseries. Argument was useless, and Mrs. Howard thought it best to allow her anger to exhaust itself without her interference. The children looked on with wonder and pity, while Lillie, whose sympathy was easily awakened, began to cry, saying, "Poor Lucy, who hurt you?" This uproar awoke the baby, and Willie added his voice to the deafening chorus.

The perplexed mother was in doubt what to do; but was compelled to attend to her infant while Anna succeeded in diverting Lillie's attention, and by the time the baby was quieted, Lucy had exhausted her powers, and waited for some one to coax her to rise from the floor, as she had been accustomed to do ; but seeing no one was disposed to notice her, she arose and stood by Mrs. Howard, while she was undressing the baby for the night. She began to tell Lucy stories for the purpose of diverting her mind, when the child forgot her troubles, and quietness was restored. After supper, the children began their sports, in which their mother joined, much to Lucy's delight, when the half hour thus spent effaced all traces of the storm which had been raging. When

the time for evening devotion came, Mrs. Howard took the opportunity to impress some instructive lessons upon the minds of the children about the control of their tempers, the sin and danger of giving way to anger, and the duty of respecting the rights of others.

Lucy said she was very sorry for her naughty actions, and promised to be a better girl. Mrs. Howard, of course, did not suppose there would be no repetition of similar scenes, but she hoped by firmness and kindness in her management to teach the child to control her quick temper. For some time she gave her leisure moments to the entertainment of the children, on Lucy's account, until she became accustomed to her new home. She found her pupil affectionate, impulsive, thoughtless and self-willed; some of her faults were the result of a want of early training. She was, however, of quick apprehension, and could easily learn her lessons if compelled to do so, but her education had almost entirely been neglected. She could read a few simple sentences by spelling the words; that was the extent of her knowledge of reading, while counting one hundred comprised all her knowledge of mathematics. She had never been *taught* to sew but had acquired a slight knowledge of the art by her own efforts, though her work, usually prepared for her doll, was gathered in one place and stretched in another to make the ends meet. She had never been assigned a task either in sewing or study, and until she came under Mrs. Howard's care she

had done just as she pleased, hence she had no conception of what application meant. Her teacher expected difficulties in trying to correct the child's faults, but she relied much upon the affectionate disposition of her pupil and Anna's example. The difference between the ages of the two girls was far less than in their attainments.

Mrs. Howard's policy was to make study or the acquisition of knowledge a pleasure to her pupils, and in the case of her own children, there was so little to occupy their attention, they were ready to listen to instruction; and to prevent Anna from studying it would have been necessary to remove all books from her reach, but her mother judiciously allowed her to follow her inclinations, so long as it did not injure her.

Lillie had been considered too young to receive regular lessons, but she had gathered not a few ideas during her sister's recitations, though apparently absorbed with her doll or kitten; after Lucy joined the family her mother considered it best for her to be taught with the others. The plan suited the child, who talked constantly of going "to tool," then she would be a "big dirl."

Lucy soon began to show that she had been a petted child, and had exercised absolute sway in the nursery. The gray kitten had been the special favorite, companion, confidant, and pupil of Lillie, and every one had tacitly conceded her right to ownership,

but now another claimant appeared in the person of the new comer. At first, Lillie was persuaded to yield her rights because her rival was a stranger, but after a while she refused to do this, and then a contest ensued in which both claimants held on to the coveted prize, until poor kitty, not liking to be pulled to pieces, broke from their grasp and scampered off, but in struggling to get away she scratched Lucy's hand. This aroused the child's temper both against the kitten and her mistress, but as pussy was beyond her reach, she inflicted a blow upon Lillie, an outrage she resented and she began to scream. This brought the mother to the scene.

"What is the matter, my children?"

Both began in an excited manner to represent their grievances.

"The kitten scratched me," said Lucy, holding up her bleeding hand.

"And what ails my Lillie?"

"Looty truck me," sobbed the child.

"Come here, and let me see about your troubles," said Mrs. Howard, taking a seat and drawing the children to her side. "Lucy, did you have the kitten?"

"Lillie had her, and I wanted her."

"My kitty," insisted Lilly.

"Then you both wanted kitty, and she ran away in the quarrel. Kitty did n't like to be pulled, so she scratched you. But why did you strike Lillie?"

"'Cause she made kitty scratch me," said Lucy, her black eyes snapping in her excitement.

"I 'm very sorry you should quarrel. You ought to love each other. It is naughty to strike any one when you are angry."

"Lillie should n't get the kitten."

Mrs. Howard saw it was useless to say anything more about the matter until Lucy was in a better mood, so she applied a soothing remedy to her hand and bound it up, then gave her attention to Lillie, who had seated herself on the floor and was sobbing as if her heart would break. She had never been struck by a playmate until now, and she could not easily forget her wrongs. Before the children retired to rest Mrs. Howard called Lucy to her side and kindly told her if she indulged in angry feelings, which would lead her to do wrong acts, she must be punished. This kind of discipline was new to the child, and she wondered what would be done to her.

The incident suggested several hints to Mrs. Howard. She saw that both children were fond of kittens, therefore she would ask to have Lucy's, which she so often mentioned, brought to her, and that might settle one cause of dispute. As to other difficulties that might arise such a remedy would probably be at hand as the case demanded. It became her study how to *avoid* troubles, as that was much easier than to adjust them after they appeared.

Her teacher found Lucy at first intractable, as she

had been as free as the birds of the forest, and could no more be kept still than the rushing, noisy brooks of her native hills. Sometimes when engaged in her lessons she would be seized with a sudden impulse to chase the kitten through the room, or frolic with Willie, or run to the barn and suddenly start up the sheep and set the hens to making a noisy cackling, but after much coaxing she would return to her tasks; she would, however, repeat her amusing freaks with variations. Such a want of decorum astonished Anna, whose sense of propriety seldom forsook her, but Lillie was highly delighted, and was disposed to take advantage of such examples.

Mrs. Howard was greatly puzzled to know how to manage so untamable a child as Lucy, and at the same time allow her a healthy freedom of action. Her curiosity was very easily aroused, and her teacher had the power to awaken and stimulate that faculty in others, and had made use of it to awaken a desire for knowledge in her own children. She called to her aid the objects and scenes with which they were familiar, and taught them to spell the names of articles in common use, and if they were of foreign manufacture she taught them something about the countries and the people where they were obtained. Her lessons, drawn from nature, made a deeper impression than those derived from books; and she even derived illustrations for enforcing moral and religious truth from this source. The sky, the heavenly bodies,

mountains, trees, flowers, the seasons, day and night, were all used as aids to impress her little ones with a sense of the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator, and inspire them with a sense of His tender love and care for them, and of their duty to love and obey Him.

These lessons were delightful recreations, not only to the pupils but also to their teacher. Mrs. Howard possessed taste and imagination joined to a good judgment; besides, her acquaintance with literature was quite extensive for those times, therefore she did not require a vast library, though she had a number of choice volumes on various subjects, but the Book of Nature was ever open to her use. After her removal to her new home, she had lived almost secluded from society, but her loss from that cause had been her gain in other ways, as it gave her time to become a diligent student of nature in many of her varied aspects. Daily observation of the grand and beautiful could not fail to stimulate her love of the works of the Creator, and her enthusiasm she imparted to those under her instruction and influence.

The lessons taught the children, Lillie repeated in her infantile way to her kitten, the baby, or whoever might choose to listen. One day her mother explained the manner plants were nourished by the circulation of the sap through the branches. The lesson was repeated, some days after, to Henry Walton, with some original amendments.

"See the booful flower. Dod made it. He made mouves; mamma said so." Looking at the stem. "See um?"

"What did he make mouths for?"

"'Cause they eat, they does."

"O, Lillie means that the plants take up water out of the ground. That is their food, and it makes them grow just as we grow by drinking milk," said Anna.

"Yes, mamma said so, she did," insisted Lillie, giving that as a sufficient and conclusive reason for her theory. "Trees all die, f'owers all die; they come to life 'gain. Papa die, he come back 'gain."

The resurrection of plants and the resurrection of the dead were blended in her mind; she had heard of both, and with a child's reasoning had joined the two.

Lucy had become quite happy in her new home; her little kitten, her dolls and their extensive wardrobes, and her other toys had been brought from her playhouse at her father's. The little Howards had never seen so many playthings in all their lives, for their parents believed that a few well-selected toys were better adapted to please them than a large number; besides they wished to teach their children to rely upon themselves for amusement as much as possible. When the weather was suitable they found entertainment out of doors, and when they were confined to the house they busied themselves in various ways, without their mother's constant attention.

Anna had been taught the lighter parts of household duties and was quite useful to her mother.

Lucy and Lillie were taught to sew; but it was no light task to keep two such lively children quiet, and their progress at first was, consequently, slow and unsatisfactory.

Dr. Clive had wisely kept away from Glen Cottage, until his daughter had become reconciled to her new home; but one day he surprised her by an unexpected visit. She was delighted to see him, getting into his lap, hanging about his neck, thrusting her hands into his pockets, and dancing about his chair, at the same time talking incessantly of her new experiences, until her father cut short her story with an imperative injunction for silence. He was highly gratified at the course Mrs. Howard was pursuing, and congratulated himself on having placed his daughter under her care.

Mr. Layton had become a frequent visitor at Glen Cottage, where he spent many of his evenings, and found a congenial friend in its mistress. He had established friendly relations between himself and the younger members, so that a visit from him was the occasion of rejoicing among them. This was of great assistance to Mrs. Howard, in her efforts to entertain her young pupils, and a great benefit to them as well as entertainment.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPELLING–SCHOOL.

"'T was in youth, that hour of dreaming,
Round me visions fair were beaming."

A FEW weeks after the term began a committee of the older scholars waited upon Mr. Layton to obtain his consent to have a "spelling-school," with the request that they might be allowed, after the exercises, a little social enjoyment. The teacher told them he was willing, but it was proper they should obtain the consent of the school committee, and as to the entertainment they must consult their friends about it. They were sure of the consent of the committee, and no less certain of the parental sanction for the "fun." If there were any who did not quite approve of the plan, they quieted their scruples by the argument that young people must have some amusement, and if they did not get it in this way they might in another more objectionable.

"Mother, mother," said Arthur Walton, bursting into the room, and dancing about in high spirits, "Mr. Layton is going to have a 'spelling-school,' and all the big fellows and girls are going to have a grand time, and he says all the old folks must come, so you must go. O, ain't I glad? 'Diddle, diddle,

Dumplin', here 's my son John,' " springing upon his brother's shoulders.

" Are you crazy, Arthur ? " said John, shaking him off.

" John, which girl are you going to take ? Is it Tilda Baldwin ? There, 't is Tilda, ain't it ? "

" Go away, you impertinent fellow," giving him a thrust, and trying to conceal a blush on his cheek.

" Where 's Henry, mother ? "

" Gone to the Cottage."

" Of course, mother. I really believe you will have to part with him for good. He likes to stay there better than at home. I want him to help father do the chores to-night."

" Why can't you help him, John ? "

" Well, mother, I want to ride over to Woodard's to see him on some business."

" Perhaps your father can get along without you. He is coming, and you can ask him."

It was not long before Pete was harnessed to the best sleigh, and John was on his way to Woodard's, but that was not his only errand, for a pretty young miss with a bewitching smile, bright blue eyes, and cheeks like a blush rose was playing magic with the youth's fancy. He was impatient to be ahead of Alfred Whiteman or Reuben Allen.

Matilda was not engaged to go with any one else, therefore she would accompany him to the " spelling-school," but her younger sister, Ellen, must go also.

That delicate matter being settled, John Walton was ready to fulfil the mission entrusted to him, — that of securing a musician for the occasion. Dan Woodard was a mulatto, the only colored man in the town, and also factotum. Like most of his race, he was fond of music, Dame Nature being his only teacher. There was more music in his whistle than in most voices, and when alone he was always whistling. Did ever a clear silver whistle sound through the air by night or day, in the village, field, or woods, it was sure to be Dan Woodard's. He was not only an expert in this art, but he was an accomplished fiddler, so the country people thought, and never was there a ball or party, but Dan Woodard must do the fiddling. His suavity and easy politeness made him popular as a waiter, hence his services were sought at the public house on special occasions, such as musters, sleighing parties, and balls, or whenever large companies were expected, and even the fashionable people had him at their weddings. He was always good-natured and obliging, but, alas, where can human perfection be found? — he was fond of strong drink, and would occasionally indulge too freely. Of course, all the young people were fond of him, as he so largely contributed to their amusement. He was always ready to oblige his friends, even at the expense of his own family, for it was believed he sometimes forgot to provide for his wife and four small children, quite contented to let the neighbors interfere in the matter.

Long before John Walton came in sight of Dan's cabin he heard his clear, shrill whistle, as it was borne on the crisp, cold air. Dan was busy attending to his stock, which comprised a cow, a horse blind in one eye, a pig, and cosset lamb. These all lived together in a rude shed, which looked as if every gust of wind might blow it to pieces. Anise Woodard was preparing supper for her family, when John drove up to the cabin. The sound of his sleigh-bells drew four little curly heads to the door, with their mother in the rear.

"Where is Dan?" inquired John. No one ever called him by any other name than Dan.

"In the shed, sir," with a low courtesy. "Please walk in."

"I cannot stop long; I will go and find him there."

"Good evening, Dan."

"Good evening, Master Walton," said Dan, with one of his most respectful bows.

"We boys are going to have a spelling-school in our district to-morrow night, and we intend to have a little fun afterwards. We want you to play for us. Will you come?"

"Thank you, Master Walton; you are too kind to a poor fellow like me." It was a way he had of disparaging himself when his vanity was at all flattered. "I shall be happy to give my humble services, if you think them of any value."

"O yes, Dan; we cannot get along without you. I shall expect you. Don't fail to come." John turned

his horse to go, but Dan, who wanted to show his hospitality, urged him to go into the house and take something warm.

"I cannot ; I must return immediately. Besides, Dan, I never drink. Good night."

"Good night," replied Dan, gracefully touching his hat, as Walton drove off.

The scholars assembled at the school-house at an early hour, every one being in excellent spirits. The older boys and girls were having a little flirtation in a sly manner, while the younger ones were chasing one another over benches, dodging behind one another, and then plunging unceremoniously into a group of by-standers, until the master came and put a stop to their sports. Sleighs began to arrive with parents and friends. The scholars brought candles, some in candlesticks and some in wire frames to fasten to the sides of the windows. The roaring, crackling fire diffused light and heat, making the bare walls and rude benches look cheerful.

Mr. Layton called upon the scholars to name the captains for the spelling match. After some bantering, Alfred Whiteman and Philanda Cutler were elected. The parties chosen took their places on opposite sides, and the election of spellers began. Courtesy gave the first choice to Miss Cutler. John Walton was called, when he took his seat beside Philanda Cutler. Matilda Baldwin was chosen by Alfred Whiteman. Then was heard Hannah Whiteman, Reu-

ben Allen, and so the election went rapidly forward, each side anxious to get the best spellers, until every scholar had been arranged on one side or the other, except one unfortunate pupil, Hiram Parker, who was chosen by lot, neither party wishing to take the risk of his spelling. Mr. Walton kept tally.

The spelling began with the one who had the first choice. When a word was missed on one side and spelled by the other, it was a loss to the first; but if it came back and was spelled correctly, it was saved. The spelling went on very briskly, the two sides for some time keeping abreast, until Whiteman began to lose a little ground, and at recess it was announced that Miss Cutler had gained five words. Then there was an uproarious shout from the Cutlerites, but the other side charged their defeat to Hiram Parker. After a short recess, "sides" were again chosen, this time by Lottie Allen and Solomon Baldwin. Mr. Layton's candle must be held for him while he was pronouncing the words, and Hiram was appointed to the office, much to his delight and the satisfaction of the other scholars who did not wish the task. This time the tally was alike when the spellers stood, and when one failed to spell the word correctly he sat down. The teacher confined himself to the spelling-book until only five or six were left standing, when he had recourse to the dictionary, yet still found it difficult to defeat two or three of his pupils. Finally all were seated except Matilda Baldwin, when he closed

the book as a sign she could not be defeated, amid the cheers of the whole school.

The spelling was over; the parents and friends with their younger children left, also Mr. Layton, and the field was open to the older pupils and a few friends from other districts. Dan Woodard arrived with his violin, and after quietness was restored he began to arrange the strings of his instrument and gave a few flourishes with his bow in professional style, which set some of the nimble feet vibrating. Dancing in those days was no lazy exercise, when the blood was sent through the veins in rapid leaps, imparting color to the cheeks and elasticity to the steps.

The room was not large enough for all the pupils to join in the dance at once, therefore some were spectators; but during the evening all had an opportunity of exhibiting their "terpsichorean" accomplishments. John Walton and Alfred Whiteman, the managers, would not allow the party to prolong their amusements until the late hours of the night, as that was not according to the wishes of their parents or the approbation of the public; therefore, the dancing being finished, the young people made preparations to depart, those living near walking, while those more distant rode to their homes. Some of the party were not exactly satisfied, since a few favorite youths escorted two young girls, while others were left without any. This caused some jealousy, though, fortunately, no tragedies occurred.

The next day the old school-house exhibited signs of the evening's revel. Drippings from the candles, fragments of paper, apple-parings, and scattered books were evidences of the scenes of the preceding evening; but the pleasure it afforded the scholars and their friends was the theme of recess conversation for a week after, and greatly advanced the popularity of Mr. Layton.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHANGING OWNERS.

"A man sat beside his merchandise,
A careworn, altered man,
His waking hope, his mighty fear,
Were money and its losses."

THE long expected visit of Mrs. Howard's brother and sister was at length made, and the occasion was both joyful and sad. When they last met it was under the paternal roof before the family circle was broken, when father, mother, brother, sister, husband and child were all present to strengthen the ties that bound Paulina Howard to life, and she felt that her cup of earthly blessings was full.

"My only regret," she said, "is in being separated from my friends. If I could live near them there would be no other earthly blessing to desire. Harvey is so kind and dear to me, and little Anna is such a comfort!"

"Paulina, you must not place your hopes on earthly friends. Our Heavenly Father will not allow His children to put implicit confidence in any earthly object."

"True, mother, I hope I shall not idolize my friends, but do you think it wrong to love them devotedly?"

"No; it is our duty to do so, but we must not place them above our Heavenly Father."

Paulina Howard, with a conscience so sensitive that the least wrong gave her pain and sent her in penitence to her closet, would not intentionally have loved husband and child as she loved her Saviour, and who could say that she did? Is it right to judge others about the secrets of the heart? Can we know why God chastises His children? It may be less on account of their sins than for their example of patience and resignation.

While separated from her friends Paulina had been called to drink the cup of sorrow; first, in the loss of a beloved father, and then, suddenly, in the death of a devoted companion.

The meeting of brother and sister naturally revived the scenes of the past, so painful to her heart, but joy at seeing her friends alleviated her sorrows.

Mr. William Sherwood was an energetic man of business, prompt, decided, and sagacious. His experience in practical farming, and his sound judgment, rendered him a valuable manager of his sister's pecuniary affairs. Before a week passed he had gained all the knowledge necessary for the settlement of his late brother-in-law's estate, and arranged his plans accordingly. It was decided to sell the farm and stock, except one cow, and the profit from the stock and farming implements would more than pay the mortgage on the farm and any incidental expenses

incurred. The use of a few acres of land was reserved for Mrs. Howard as long as she remained at the Cottage.

Mr. Walton needed more land, as his boys were growing to manhood, and after due consultation with his family, he decided to purchase the Howard farm, though Mrs. Howard could occupy it as long as she wished. He said that we must keep the widow in the neighborhood, "I would rather have old Pete go, than have her move away, and if anyone else buys the farm, she, of course will leave."

Her brother offered her a home with himself, but she decided to remain at the Cottage while her children were so young. She said it would be better for her to remain; besides, her independent spirit was averse to accepting pecuniary aid, unless absolutely necessary. When her family needed greater facilities for education than she could afford, she might be obliged to accept her brother's generous offer.

Purchasers were found for everything that was to be sold, and now came one of the severest trials for the family, since its master had been laid in the grave. Dr. Clive bought Fleety, and the sorrow of the mother and children at parting with her, found some alleviation in the fact that the animal had so kind a master. Fleety, the gentlest of horses, was a sorrel mare with a white star in her forehead and white around her feet which the children called her stockings. She had been much petted and would come to

the door for her choice morsels taken from the hands of Anna and Lillie. Mr. Howard had often indulged his children in horseback rides around the yard, and in these exploits, Fleety seemed fully consious of the responsibility of her charge and walked or trotted as if she were carrying a basket of china and afraid of its breaking.

When Dr. Clive came to take her away, the children burst into tears with loud lamentations, which were quieted by his promising to drive her home often and take the children to ride. The favorite cow was kept, but the rest of the stock was sold to different neighbors, and Mrs. Howard felt that these animals, the object of her husband's care, would be treated kindly.

After Mr. Sherwood had sold all the disposable property at the Howard farm, he proceeded to settle the accounts against the estate, which were few, in small bills, as Howard was always scrupulous about contracting debts. The largest of much account, was the mortgage on his farm. A considerable payment had been made just before his death, but Mr. Merill had not been anxious for the settlement of that debt, and when he heard of the sad event, he counted on getting the farm. Howard had brought it under excellent cultivation, and the buildings were new and in good condition, which made the property a desirable prize; but how to manage so that his scheme might succeed, became the object of deep study to the wily trader.

"If," thought he, "I can induce the widow to keep it and allow me to place Griswold there to carry it on, I think with his co-operation, it may come into my possession in a few years. Women do not understand managing business, and can be easily duped. She will, of course, need supplies from the store, and by running up large bills without settlement, it will not be difficult soon to spend all the farm is worth. I will call and see her before long to aid me in my plan."

This scheme seemed the most feasible and he thought it over many times, making such changes as he considered best, until he had elaborated it into a finished piece of strategy.

While he was working at his scheme one day, Mr. Sherwood called on business. The two men had never met before, but they felt a mutual distrust before they had been five minutes together. Mr. Merill was the senior of Mr. Sherwood by several years. He had thin, stern features and a quick, furtive glance, with a forehead indicating intelligence; his whole aspect was cold and forbidding. He was apparently affable, but there was a sinister smile on his features which led a close observer to be on his guard.

Mr. Sherwood had strong features, a broad forehead, and decided firmness of the mouth. His manner was decided, but abrupt at times. Both men were shrewd and understood the world, especially the business world. After introducing himself and making known

his errand, Mr. Sherwood was addressed by Mr. Merill in most cordial terms.

"What does Mrs. Howard propose to do on the farm?" inquired Mr. Merill.

"She proposes to do nothing," replied Mr. Sherwood.

"Nothing! Why, she will not allow so good a farm run to waste. It seems to me she ought to have some experienced hand to carry it on. Let me see; there's Griswold, he's a capital farmer. Mrs. Howard is a sister of yours, is n't she? Well, I will say to you that she is one of the best women in town. It would be a great pity to lose her, Mr. Sherwood."

"What is the amount of the mortgage unpaid, Mr. Merill?"

"A trifle, Mr. Sherwood, a mere trifle. It's no consequence whether it's paid or not at present. It could n't be in better hands," meaning his own, probably, "if I do say it."

Mr. Sherwood thought differently, though he did not say so.

"The farm is sold, and must be freed from incumbrances before the deed is given."

"Sold, did you say? I never heard of it. To whom?"

"Mr. Walton bought it."

"Really, now, I had n't supposed Walton was able to own two farms. Are you sure he is able to pay for it?"

"Perfectly sure; as good as the Bank of England."

Without further discussion the debt was paid, and the last chance for the Howard farm was lost to Mr. Merill, and long after Mr. Sherwood had gone the merchant sat brooding over the subject, dejected and moody. He was deeply chagrined that he had been outwitted, for he plainly saw that Mr. Sherwood suspected his motives. His plans he had pondered over so long had utterly failed, and he now turned his attention to his other debtors, from whom he might reap some advantages to compensate for his imaginary losses. He had set his heart so earnestly upon obtaining Howard's farm, he came to believe that he had been really ill-used. He examined his papers, comprising mortgages, bonds, notes, etc, held against different persons, until he came to one labelled "Page to Merill."

"Ah! this mortgage must be foreclosed. Humph! that farm is worth little, but there's a piece of land on Maple Hill I want cleared and reduced to cultivation. I must have a sheep pasture on that hill. Now, Page has half a dozen or more boys, and what is better for them than to chop trees and burn brush; it will keep them out of idleness and mischief, and it is said they are inclined that way. Jones wants Page's land, and I can sell it for a good price. Let's see; what did it cost? Never mind, I shall make one hundred and fifty per cent. Page better begin on Maple Hill when spring opens. There is a log shanty

on the grounds now, and he can change it into a comfortable house by little effort.

"What's here? O, this is the claim on Dan Woodard's place. What can be done with this? The new comer — I 've forgotten his name — wants a small piece of ground with buildings. How will it do to let him have that? Dan will never redeem it, and who cares for a black man? Perhaps I can find some corner for him to work upon many years to come. The only trouble is he 'll never labor two days at a time.

"Here 's Parker's note, no interest paid for three years, and he can't pay it; besides, he 's running a bill at the store, a large part of it for rum. Well, he 'll have a mortgage on his farm before six months, and when I get my hands on it, the property is mine. Parker 's a capital farmer if he would let rum alone, but it 's all over with him now."

Thus Mr. Merill went through his package marking several papers for immediate attention, while others were labelled six months, twelve months, good, or useless, according to the trader's view of the case. He was the principal merchant in the town, and though several other stores had been started at different times by other persons, scarcely one could compete with him and sooner or later would resign their business.

The only one who could in any sense be called a rival, was the firm of Moore & Knolton, young and enterprising men who made their store attractive by

introducing some modern improvements not found in ordinary country stores, and were gaining customers, much to the discomfiture of Mr. Merill, though he still held the vantage ground in consequence of being an older settler and having so many of the inhabitants in his debt. He was the wealthiest man in Jefferson, and much of his wealth consisted in land obtained by mortgages which his skilful financiering had always made profitable investments. He had the unenviable reputation of overreaching in trade, and it was seldom that anyone escaped from his power without being cheated. With such a reputation, it was surprising to many, that anyone should have extensive dealings with him, but it was those who were in need of money and must buy on credit.

When Page was notified that he must leave his farm, he became utterly discouraged, and what little energy he possessed seemed to forsake him. His wife bemoaned her lot so pathetically, that any one but a hard-hearted person would have relented, but the feeling of pity where dollars and cents were concerned, never found a lodgment in the heart of Merill, who said : —

" Shiftlessness is the cause. A large family of children growing up in idleness, and so many mouths to feed, yet not half enough is raised to satisfy them. Why are poor folks cursed with so large families ? It makes no difference where Page lives, it will be all the same ; besides, it is a great kindness to give him another chance. Not every creditor would have

trusted him so well after waiting so long for his pay." It was in this manner the inflexible merchant quieted his conscience. Maple Hill had a little patch of clearing, and the log house previously mentioned had been built for a sugar house, there being a large number of sugar maples in the vicinity.

When spring came, the neighbors lent a helping hand to fit up his desolate dwelling for immediate use. It was of pretty good size, but consisted of only one room without doors or windows. These were supplied and the room was divided into two apartments. Under the supervision of Mr. Walton, things began to wear a more cheerful aspect. Aunt Jenny, whose pity had been greatly excited for the destitute family, gave bountiful supplies from her own stores, and obtained from many of the well-to do neighbors articles of comfort for the home of the Pages which they did not have in their old home, so they had some compensation for the change.

The farmers in the neighborhood gave a day's work each, in clearing the grounds of timber and other obstructions and preparing the soil for cultivation, and promised to build a barn after "haying time." By the assistance of his neighbors, Page received quite an encouraging start, and had he possessed energy and perseverance he might have gained a comfortable living from the soil which was naturally rich, but these qualities he did not have, therefore he lived much after his usual custom.

When Mrs. Howard heard of the misfortunes of the Pages, she felt a desire to assist them, and after thinking of the subject she decided that her late husband's clothing might be serviceable in supplying the wants of so large a family of boys. But how could she part with the cherished articles of one so dear to her memory? There was a sacredness attached to everything that had belonged to him, and it seemed almost irreverent to give them to strangers, but she thought it was selfish to decline. What would be her departed husband's wish? She believed he would approve, therefore she resolved to make the sacrifice. The gift was timely and relieved the family of the Pages from embarrassment and want of suitable clothing for some time.

CHAPTER XV.

FANNY SHERWOOD.

"Last year she was a wayward child,
But Love has come, and everywhere,
In blooming earth, in balmy air,
It seems as though an angel smiled."

CLIVE LAYTON had been a frequent visitor at Glen Cottage since his introduction to the Howards, and the time spent there, he considered the happiest of his residence in the district, and his calls were still more agreeable to him after the arrival of Mrs. Howard's young sister. Her vivacity, overflowing happiness, and child-like artlessness made her society like a sunbeam, wherever she went. From her cradle, her exuberance of joy found expression in gestures and singing, and when too young to exhibit her emotions by words, she would utter her melody in birdlike sounds, whence her pet name, "Birdie." As she grew older, she developed a voice of uncommon sweetness, which her friends had encouraged her to cultivate. Mr. Layton also had a noble voice and delicate ear for music, and it was not long before each discovered the other's taste. The love of music was the tie which united two enthusiastic hearts, at first unconsciously, until they were firmly united in

one. Other bonds of sympathy were gradually developed as their acquaintance advanced, but music was the primal source of their mutual sympathy.

Fanny Sherwood, though sixteen years old, did not appear more than fourteen, either in looks or manners. She was the youngest and favorite member of a large family, and had been regarded as a child to be amused, therefore she considered herself as such, yet to a close observer, beneath that child-like form and manner, was a depth of character which only needed development, to render her an energetic and useful woman. Her sister, Paulina, observed this, and hoped a change of residence and the gradual increase of responsibility requiring independence of thought and action, would mature her character, and give her just ideas of her true sphere in life.

Clive Layton, who was dignified in manners, was, very naturally, regarded older than he was, therefore Fanny, at first acquaintance, treated him as an older brother, while he regarded her as a sprightly, intelligent, and interesting child. She had been kept at school most of the time, until within a few months, and as a pupil, she made good progress in her studies, and when she left, like most pupils, she was pleased that study would be laid aside, and she would be free from books and discipline.

She had never given a thought to her future career; indeed she had no other than a dreamy idea that she might at some time be settled for life, as all her

brothers and sisters had been, but that she had any responsible mission in the world, she thought no more about than the little birds whose songs she tried to imitate.

A few days after her arrival at Glen Cottage, Fanny asked her sister for assistance in a certain piece of work.

"Paulina, will you show me how to do this?"

"Have you never done this kind of work for yourself?"

"Why, no; I don't know how to do it."

"How should *I* know?" replied Mrs. Howard.

"You learned, of course," said Fanny.

"Yes, and you can do the same. I could show you but I prefer that you should do it yourself."

With a little advice Fanny succeeded in accomplishing the work.

Layton soon discovered that this young girl was more mature mentally than he supposed. She felt a new interest in those branches of knowledge previously uninteresting to her, from the novel and lucid manner he treated them, while his superior education led her to a consciousness of her deficiencies, and she desired to resume her studies. Layton volunteered to aid her, and soon found his pupil apt to learn and diligent in her studies. It may be interesting to allow Fanny to relate her own story.

MY DEAR KATE, — You asked me to tell you all about this heathenish place, as you called it, which you considered beyond

the limits of civilization, and of the awkward country acquaintances I am supposed to meet. Well, now the whole town is buried under a snowbank, and as to the natives, I have seen only a few, except my sister Paulina's family; but these few, I should judge, belong to the *genus Homo*, — at least they are bipeds without feathers, — but future developments *may* reveal a new species. You know what a good-for-nothing little toy I have always been regarded, and I liked it, too, since it rendered any great effort on my part needless; but your harmless little "Birdie" is likely to have her wings clipped. Paulina, a good, kind sister though she is, has so many scruples about my dependent, aimless life, that she will not rest until she has accomplished a complete amendment of her little sister's faults. What do you think she has already done? You will hardly believe that she, in a kind way, compelled me to "cut out" and make a dress for one of her children, and has taught me to make bread, too, and says it is nice; but I think she flattered me a little, for I saw Anna "make a face" when eating it. I am also installed "schoolmarm" in the family. Now I know that you will laugh outright when you learn that so giddy a girl, who could never keep still more than a humming-bird, has assumed so grave responsibilities. My pupils comprise Anna and Lillie Howard and a little girl by the name of Lucy Clive, the daughter of the physician, whose mother died when she was very young. She is a wild and wilful child, with black eyes and dark hair, and with all kinds of impulses, good and mischievous, as one often encounters. I like her, though, she is so peculiar.

Lillie Howard is the queerest little tot one ever saw. She does so many original things and says so many funny ones, she keeps us laughing from morning until night, while Anna is so mature that she puzzles me with her questions, and then I have to appeal to her mother for a solution.

There is one other person I will mention, — that is the schoolmaster, Clive Layton, a member of Dartmouth College. Everyone is praising him for being superior to any teacher they ever

knew before. He was quite intimate at Paulina's before I came, and now continues his calls. He is a genuine pedagogue, — tall, stately, grave at times, and fond of study. At first I thought I should never like him, he seemed so reserved. I was afraid to speak, lest I might make some blunder; but after a better acquaintance he became quite affable, and when he discovered that I could sing, we got on very well. We often sing together, and sometimes Paulina joins us. He is interesting in conversation and talks so much about the books he has read that I am ashamed of my ignorance. I said the other day that I intended to resume my studies, when he offered to give me any assistance in his power. Doubtless he regards me as a very ignorant little girl, with limited capacities, whom it would be an act of generosity to instruct. I shall try to improve under his tuition and prove to him that I desire to be something more than a plaything. Your devoted friend,

FANNY SHERWOOD.

It would have been an unusual incident, if two young persons whose hearts were free, and whose tastes and sympathies were congenial, meeting so often, the one to guide, and the other to be instructed in knowledge, should not have the deep fountains of love moved, perhaps too deep for consciousness at first, but all the more truly. So it was with Clive Layton and Fanny Sherwood. Neither had fathomed his or her own heart, or suspected what the other felt. Fanny had been such a child in understanding her own emotions, that the dawning of a new passion troubled her. She had known what friendship meant, but her feelings toward Layton were different, and under their influence she became reserved in her

manners, pensive, and often startled at the mention of his name. She anticipated his visits with eagerness and misgivings; she wished to see him and at the same time to avoid him. She was losing her vivacity and would often shed tears at those airs she had so frequently sung with thoughtless joy. Mrs. Howard noticed the change and suspected the cause, and was anxious lest her sister might become too deeply interested in Mr. Layton for her happiness, for she supposed he was engaged to Alice Bradford, Dr. Clive's niece, judging from rumor, and from the fact of his being so familiar in the doctor's family.

Mr. Layton's manner toward Fanny had been perfectly honorable, and he had never been known to take advantage of her confidence to win her love, but Mrs. Howard thought she detected some indications that he was endeavoring to suppress a struggling passion, and in this she was not mistaken, as will be seen in his letter to Paul Crawford, his college classmate. He wrote as follows:—

"My vacation will soon close, and I must return to Alma Mater with, I hope, a fresh instalment of wisdom and experience, agreeable or otherwise. You may have been informed about some of my adventures in this quiet town, but I have a new experience to relate.

"Perhaps I mentioned Mrs. Howard, a very agreeable acquaintance, whose husband died very suddenly. Soon after I came here, I found the lady a valuable friend, intelligent, refined, and the mother of three lovely children. This is an introduction to a very interesting topic. Some weeks ago, a young sister of

Mrs. Howard came to spend a few months wi h her, and being on very cordial terms with the family, I continued my visits until they are indispensable to my happiness. Need I say why? The little sister is the most bewitching specimen of her sex I ever met. Though not perfectly beautiful as the term is used, yet she has what is far better, a well-balanced mind, attractive manners, and a noble character. I have undertaken to assist her in some of her studies, and have discovered in her quickness of perception, ready wit, nice discrimination, and correct taste. This was a delightful surprise, because I had considered her only as an engaging child adapted to amuse, and that was all. I think she regards me old enough for her father,— I am just five years her senior, — but she evidently considers me as dignified as a judge.

"On our first acquaintance, she appeared very affable, but lately she seems cold and reserved. What has caused the change is a puzzle to me. I know what you will say, and it may be true. Do you ask me what I think of Alice Bradford? I never felt for her other than a brotherly love, and though beautiful and amiable, she has not the mental qualities to satisfy my tastes. You see I am not in a mood to return to college, and during the few weeks of my teaching here, I shall try to settle this question of anxious suspense, either for weal or for woe."

After Layton's communication with his college classmate, the young friends, as they called themselves, became more estranged, and resolved to break the enchantment, but always found it impossible — Clive, from a fear that his affection was unrequited, and Fanny, from maidenly pride that hers was not sought, until they had made themselves thoroughly miserable. As the time for Clive's return to college was near, he determined to end the doubt,

but his sense of manly pride and fear of refusal prevented a declaration of his feelings until he had consulted her friends, therefore he resolved to lay the case before Mrs. Howard; but still he delayed, hoping and fearing. If Fanny Sherwood was doubtful about her feelings towards Clive Layton, an incident occurred which settled the question.

One day Polly McClure called at the Cottage on her way from the village, where she had collected a budget of news, as usual, and had scattered along the way, gathering something at each stopping place, so that when she reached Mrs. Howard's her original stock was quadrupled. The subject was principally concerning Mr. Layton.

"So the school-master is going to marry Dr. Clive's niece."

"Ah, is he?" replied Mrs. Howard.

"Yes, everybody says so, and I guess it's true, for I saw her in Merill's to-day buying sheeting; and what can she want of it if she ain't going to be married?"

"She could buy it for the Doctor's use, could n't she?"

"Well, they went off riding the other day, and was gone two or three hours. Lyddy Clark said so. What 's he go to Dr. Clive's so much for, if they ain't going to be married?"

"He 's a relative of the Doctor's," suggested Mrs. Howard.

"Anyhow, the girl that catches Mr. Layton gets an awful good husband. Now there's my Johnny — he thinks nobody's so good as the master. I believe he'd fall down and worship him as a hathen idle. I would n't wonder if half the girls of the village broke their hearts for him. Alice is as handsome as a pictur, and I guess he's proud of her."

Mrs. McClure might have gone on in this way for an hour longer, if Mrs. Howard, observing Fanny's anxiety, had not adroitly changed the subject of conversation. Fanny was sewing by the window, and when she heard Layton's name spoken, she listened attentively, but when it was associated with Alice Bradford, she became excited and a mist was before her eyes. Her color changed from pink to white, and when she looked out of the window objects seemed to move. She attempted to leave the room, but a faintness came over her and she did not venture to rise. In this distress of mind she continued until the unwelcome visitor left. Her feelings were no longer under her control, therefore she went to her room and wept. Her pride had prevented her from acknowledging to herself that she loved Layton. He had never sought her love nor confessed his own, but the suffering Fanny endured when she supposed that Layton loved another, humiliated her. Could she ever suppress her feelings and appear calm and cheerful in his presence? Was it not selfish, she thought, not to desire to see Clive and Alice happy? She thought

she had never experienced real sorrow before, not even when her beloved father died. She regretted that she ever came to her sister's home, and she would go to any distant region if she could recover her peace of mind. She was so distressed that a violent headache ensued, and she could not appear when Clive called in the evening.

Mrs. Howard understood the cause of Fanny's suffering, though no words had passed between them on the subject, but she thought it best not to urge her to confess the truth, as it would be in opposition to her sister's modesty, until the general reports could be proved true.

When Clive learned of Fanny's illness, he was apparently dejected, and said but little, and after several attempts at conversation, in which he seemed to be in deep thought, he left at an early hour, saying he would call to-morrow. The disappointment at not meeting Fanny, and the anxiety for her health, led him to understand that she had become indispensable to his happiness.

"If I cannot endure her absence for one evening," thought he, "how could I be reconciled to an entire separation, and why should I be so moved at the possibility of her severe suffering? I cannot endure this torturing suspense any longer. I am resolved to know the worst."

With these thoughts, Layton went to his room, but not to rest. His mind was too much agitated to

allow him to sleep, and, according to his promise, he called the next evening. Fanny had been too ill to rise from her bed, therefore Mrs. Howard was alone, when Layton improved the opportunity to make known his feelings.

"Mrs. Howard," he began, "you probably have discovered by my frequent calls and manner towards your sister, that I have a stronger feeling than friendship for her. This is true, and if I could win her love, I should feel that my cup of bliss was full. If her friends have no serious objections, I desire to offer her my hand; my heart she has already. I am not worthy of such a prize, but I will make her happiness my constant study. Do you think there is any hope for me?"

Mrs. Howard replied that she believed Fanny's happiness would be in safe-keeping, and if he loved her, it would be best to tell her himself. Layton withdrew more hopeful, and after he had gone, Mrs. Howard went to her sister, who was not aware that Clive had called. She had fallen into a troubled slumber, but awoke on her sister's entrance.

"My dear Birdie, how do you feel now?"

"Better, dear Paulina; I hope by to-morrow to be quite well. The pain in my head is almost gone."

"Dr. Clive has been here to take you and the children to ride. When I told him you were not able to go to-day, he said he would call again to-morrow fore-

noon, so you must be well by that time, my dear little sister."

"He is, indeed, very kind, but do you think it is best for me to go?"

"Certainly; it will improve your health."

Mrs. Howard thought Fanny's hesitation was connected in some way with Clive Layton, and she was correct in her conjecture. Her sister had resolved to break off all intercourse with him, as far as possible, therefore wished to avoid everything that might remind her of him.

"Fanny," said Mrs. Howard, "I have not had an opportunity to speak about Mrs. McClure since she was here, you have been so ill. I will now say her reports are not to be trusted. She is quite well understood, and few persons place much confidence in what she says. Her statements about Mr. Layton and Alice Bradford are entirely unfounded, for I have their refutation from no less authority than Dr. Clive himself."

Had a ray of sunshine suddenly burst into the room at that hour of the evening, it would not have surprised the sufferer more than her sister's words. Though a flush passed over Fanny's pale cheeks and tears filled her eyes, she made no reply, but her sister noticed the effect. She said no more on the subject preferring to leave Clive to declare his love, and for her to hear it from his own lips.

When the Doctor called the next day, Fanny was

more cheerful and like herself than she had been for some time. She and the children took a long ride with him, and when they returned he observed that the "Lilies had returned blush roses," a compliment intended for her, but which she applied to Lillie Howard. From the Doctor's countenance it might be inferred that he understood how matters were tending, but how he got wind of it no one could tell, as if he could not have understood it from Clive Layton's frequent visits, his absence of mind, and other symptoms of lovers.

During the afternoon Mrs. Howard, with her children, called upon the Waltons, leaving Fanny alone. The day had been pleasant and promised one of those glorious sunsets which are a peculiar feature of New England. Fanny's love of nature in all her varied aspects was intense, but it never seemed more beautiful than now. The windows of the sitting-room opened to the west, affording a broad view of the horizon, and on this evening there was a collection of red and gold clouds covering the whole western sky. The sun had just entered the mass of molten gold and became partially obscured, but his course could be traced by the fiery rays emanating in all directions.

Fanny was so absorbed in witnessing the splendor of the scene, she did not notice the entrance of Clive Layton, who came and stood by her side Just at this moment the sun came from behind a cloud, and

his rays fell upon her beautiful hair, while her countenance glowed with enthusiasm. She turned, and was surprised to see Clive by her side, and as she raised her eyes to his, he gave her such a look of passionate tenderness that a blush suffused her cheeks, and her eyes, filling with tears, were cast down. They stood silent for a moment, as each understood the other.

"Fanny," said Clive, "I need not tell you of my love. You already possess my secret. Do you respond to this emotion?"

She did not reply, but gently placed her trembling hand in his, as a pledge of her affection.

When heart responds to heart, and mind to mind, words are useless; silence is often the best expression of love. They stood gazing upon the glorious scene of nature, until the brightness faded away. They lived years in emotions, during the brief space their hearts had been united. Henceforth, the currents of their lives were blended, and would flow on together through time and eternity. Such was the speechless vow made to each other, and they offered a silent prayer to their Heavenly Father, as they stood together, that He would bless their future years. Clive was the first to break the silence.

"My dear Fanny, nature is favorable to our union. She has accepted our course; therefore, let us commemorate this important event of our lives by observing this hour, either together or separately, by offering a prayer."

"Yes, Clive; so let it be."

When Mrs. Howard returned, she understood the matter was settled, not from anything that was said, but from the calm happiness and delicate tenderness of Clive and Fanny. As devotedly as Fanny loved Clive, she would not consent to a union with him until her mother's sanction had been obtained; therefore she wrote to her about her engagement, her letter being followed by one from Clive, soliciting her consent to their marriage.

Fanny's letter was as follows:—

MY DEAR MOTHER, — How can I write to you, my heart is so full of joy, — not the gay and thoughtless joy I once had, but a happiness so deep, so full, that I sometimes feel it inexpressible. O mother, your thoughtless child has become a thoughtful woman. What has produced this change? do you ask? I have given my heart to one who is worthy of it, were it a hundred-fold richer in love and devotion than it is. He has my happiness in his keeping, for I could not be happy without his affection. But, dear mother, as much as I love Clive Layton, I will never consent to our marriage without your approval. I will not dwell upon his noble qualities, for Paulina will do that, but I plead my own heart's necessities. You will like him when you become acquainted with him. Beloved mother, write and let me know your wishes. YOUR LOVING BIRDIE.

Fanny's letter brought the following reply:—

MY DEAREST BIRDIE, — Your letter, so unexpected in the subject, gave me both pleasure and sorrow, — the latter, because the time has come when I must resign my youngest and darling child to a stranger's care. I had fondly but selfishly hoped I

could retain her during my remaining days, and that all the wealth of her affectionate nature would have been given to me, but I see now that I was mistaken. It is hard for a mother to hold a second place in the affections of her children, and I hope to be excused for clinging to my youngest; still I resign her to the one who will love and cherish her.

Your letter afforded me pleasure, darling, that you have apparently made a wise choice, and that you are conscious of the duties and responsibilities you will assume by the relation of wife. I will write to Mr. Layton, and from his letter you will learn more of my views on the subject than I now give you. Both of you have my sincere good-will, and may you always live in harmony and the fear of God.

YOUR MOTHER.

Layton, in writing to Paul Crawford, said: —

"The decision has been made, the die is cast, and I am a captive bound for the hymeneal altar. I brought my courage up to the point, and have won. My beloved's name is Fanny, — to me the sweetest of names. Her friends have consented to our union, which must be deferred until I am settled in my profession. This will prove no slight incentive to exertion on my part to establish myself as soon as possible after graduating. My profession has been decided, and I shall enter the first favorable opening. In about two weeks I expect to be with you at our old quarters. My short residence here has been attended with great results, and in regard to *our* future, — henceforth I write in the dual, — it has been the most important of my life. May you, Paul, become such as I am, — I will not say, 'except these bonds,' but altogether as I am. CLIVE."

CHAPTER XVI.

A NEW MOVEMENT.

"The school's lone porch with reverend mosses gray,
Just tells the pensive pilgrim where it lay."

It had been customary for the parents and friends of the pupils to visit the school on the last day of the term. Mr. Layton had made special preparations for the occasion, such as reviews of studies, exercises in declamation, and singing. To make the occasion more interesting to the visitors and give a fresh impulse to education in the town, he invited the people of the district to attend, and besides those, Dr. Clive, Mr. Goodell, and a few other friends from the village, so that the little school-house was crowded with scholars and spectators. The exercises were highly creditable both to the pupils and their teacher. Curly Jack spoke his piece and received great applause by the clapping of hands, while Arthur Walton and little Mary Whiteman exhibited much dramatic talent, so considered the audience, when they performed their part. "Marvellous 'tirely," whispered Mr. Chapin, no less than half a dozen times, while Prudy, just as they retired from the platform, began to comprehend what it was all about and, wiping her spectacles, said in a very loud whisper, "Well, now, did you ever see the

like?" 'Squire Baldwin was there, looking like a martyr as he urged his portly figure into the small desk, though he gave unmistakable signs of amusement when anything excited his mirth.

At the close of the exhibition, Mr. Layton invited the committee to make a speech. Mr. Walton said he was not accustomed to speak in public, but there was a gentleman present who was, and then called upon Mr. Goodell, who made some remarks which called forth loud applause. Dr. Clive was then invited to speak. He had a fund of humor when once it could be awakened, and he made some facetious remarks which put all his listeners in excellent spirits. He closed by saying the town was greatly indebted to the teacher for the benefit he had conferred upon us, but he was not inclined to bestow credit only on one side. He thought Mr. Layton was greatly indebted to the town for the rich treasure he would take away. The audience turned their eyes toward the teacher, who colored deeply, as if he had been guilty of plundering the public treasury. The literal minds supposed the Doctor referred to the small wages paid him, but the curious ones thought he referred to Alice Bradford, though none did understand what he meant, except Layton and the Doctor himself.

After the company retired, Mr. Layton took leave of his pupils, not without sincere regret on both sides. The scholars were sad at parting with a teacher they

so highly respected and loved; even Rock White had become one of his most devoted champions. A short time after closing his school, Clive Layton returned to Alma Mater, to complete his college course. He was to graduate this year and had not hitherto looked forward to the time of leaving college with the eagerness many students feel, but now he had a new and powerful incentive to begin at once the practical duties of life. Having selected teaching as a profession, he could enter immediately upon his calling; besides he had acquired considerable practical knowledge of his business both before and during his connection with college life, therefore he was prepared, in a measure, to enter upon his chosen vocation.

Mr. Layton's methods in his early experiences as a teacher gave promise of his future success. The expectations of his friends were fully met by his honorable and useful career in his profession. Soon after receiving his degree of B. A. from the college faculty, he began his labors in a prominent institution of learning, where he became eminent as an educator. Eventually his name was associated with the best and most influential instructors of his own and other States of New England, so that his school became the resort of pupils from different parts of the country. His methods of teaching were in advance of the times, and embraced many of those now in use, but many of his measures were entirely original. It was the char-

acter of the man, and to understand him one must see him in his class-room. His influence over his pupils, both intellectual and moral, was salutary and permanent. Even during his brief term in Jefferson it became a power, and did not end with the closing of his school, for he had succeeded in stimulating a healthy ambition in his pupils and awakened a new interest in education throughout the town, so that it was difficult for an ordinary teacher to obtain a situation in any of the schools, or, if any one did, it became a doubtful question whether he could retain his position. Several teachers who succeeded Layton failed, and were obliged to acknowledge a defeat, not because the school was more difficult to manage than others, but for the reason that a higher standard both in teaching and governing was exacted by the parents and pupils.

This new interest was not ephemeral as is often the case in all reforms, but it steadily deepened until a school of a higher grade was established in the town some years after, which acquired considerable reputation in that section of the State. Several of its subsequent teachers had been pupils of Mr. Layton, and had imbibed his enthusiasm and adopted his system.

Becoming interested in the schools, the inhabitants of Jefferson were led to improve their school buildings, and several of the miserable structures were either remodelled, or new ones took their places and, after some years, the academy building was enlarged

and improved, and became the pride and ornament of the town.

There was, however, great opposition from the conservative citizens, generally the largest tax-payers, to spend so much money needlessly, they said. They agreed that what was good for the parents was good enough for their children. They had obtained their education in no better school-houses than the old ones, and they did not think it wise to make the acquisition of knowledge too easy lest the learner should not appreciate it. The public money should be expended in some better way than building palaces for rude boys to pull down. The younger and more progressive spirits opposed these arguments, by contending that the health of the children demanded better accommodations, that their places of study ought to be made more attractive, that they might consider it a pleasure and not a punishment to attend school, that the young mind should be imbued with the idea of beauty instead of repulsiveness. They argued that more money ought to be expended, not only on the school buildings, but in lengthening the school term and securing better teachers, and paying higher salaries. Thus a warfare was waged at every town meeting for some years, the progressive party slowly but surely gaining ground until they outvoted their opponents.

It was a cause of regret that other towns were not inclined to follow the example of Jefferson, in securing

greater facilities for public education. Too many are still far behind in the march of improvement — both in regard to schools and school-houses. It is no uncommon sight to see miserable, dilapidated buildings with nothing cheerful or convenient about them, occupied for schools, in the rural districts. Building school-houses both beautiful and commodious, is not a needless outlay of public money, for in this way will occur a large profit in a more refined taste, a more elevated moral tone, and a more ardent love for knowledge in the young, provided a proper respect for public property is enforced upon their attention. Perhaps much of the vandalism exhibited by members of public schools had its origin in the absence of all taste in their surroundings.

Before closing the chapter, a brief notice of one of the characters of the story may be given.

"Who veileth love, should first have vanquished love."

Alice Bradford, and Clive Layton who was three years her senior, had been brought up near each other. They were orphans and their mothers were cousins, while their bereavements brought them into close sympathy. The children had been playmates from their earliest days and had attended the same school, and the joys and sorrows of one had been shared by the other. Being the only children of their parents, each sought in the other the companionship of brother and sister. The boy, conscious of his superior strength,

gently and carefully protected the little Alice, while she affectionately and confidingly trusted him, calling him "dear brother," and as she grew older, she always defended him against any blame his youthful follies might have caused him. In personal appearance, she was fair as a lily, her cheeks were like a blush rose, her hair fell over her shoulders in golden waves, while her eyes were mild and affectionate. Clive's dark hair and eyes and expressive features formed a striking contrast to the soft, delicate, and infantile features of his young cousin. Alice, whose intellectual qualities were fair but not brilliant, found an ally in her stronger companion who gladly assisted her through any difficulties in her school experience. She loved Clive as a sister would a brother, while he cherished for her the regard a noble brother would for a lovely sister. He was as anxious for her honor and happiness as a brother could be, and resented as quickly any want of respect towards her from his own sex. The only instance of his chastising a schoolmate was in consequence of a rude and unbecoming remark made about her, when he promptly gave the offender a severe whipping. On account of their ardent attachment some of their friends thought that it might in the future result in a union for life.

The young friends were not separated until Clive left to prepare for college, when Alice, after the death of her mother, went to live with her uncle, Dr. Clive; so the young cousins were separated, though they

corresponded with each other but gradually became more reserved in expressing their feelings. As it had been suggested that they might unite their fortunes, Clive, when arriving at manhood, began to analyze his feeling towards Alice, and the result was that his love, though sincere and devoted, would not justify the offer of his hand. True, his regard for her might possibly ripen into a stronger feeling, but, until then, he would not allow his lips to utter what his heart did not feel.

He had not seen Alice for two years, when he came to Jefferson, and during that time he had changed intellectually but she had remained the same in mind, though she had gained in personal beauty. They supposed before they met each other that no change had taken place, but they soon learned their mistake. Clive was impressed with the personal beauty of his cousin, and the effect was noticeable by his embarrassment and reserved manner which produced a corresponding feeling in Alice. The playmate of former days had passed into mature manhood and was intellectual, noble in appearance, and dignified in manners. Alice would have preferred to see him as he used to be.

"Now," said she, "he will not regard me as formerly, I shall not venture to be on friendly terms with him."

Alice had never closely examined her own heart, for she never remembered the time when she had not regarded him with sisterly affection. She had always believed in him, and whatever he said or did was

right in her estimation. Had he asked her to become his wife, or to regard him as a brother, she would have given her consent, provided she could have offered him her supreme homage and been loved in return. She had never developed what would be considered a strong character, but her constancy and devotion to her friends were hardly equalled, and any intimation that they were changing in their feelings towards her filled her heart with grief.

When Clive arrived Alice was confident that he had lost his regard for her; but after a time his reserve gave way, and his former cordial manner was resumed, which encouraged her to hope he had not forgotten their early friendship. He found her the same confiding, warm-hearted friend; but he was more firmly convinced that he cherished for her no other feeling than that of their childhood and youth. Her transparent character led him to see that she was still devoted to him, but whether she cherished a tenderer sentiment was not certain. He would have scorned to trifle with her affections, yet he would have been unhappy had he discovered any indifference towards himself. Thus matters stood between them when Fanny Sherwood arrived.

Alice and Fanny did not, for some time, meet, until Clive had become specially interested in the latter, though Alice was not aware of the fact until they were brought together during a social party at Dr. Clive's. When the two young persons were

introduced to each other there was a momentary feeling of jealousy between them. Fanny regarded Alice as the affianced of the man she admired, while the latter looked upon her as a rival. With less generous natures, these views would have caused estrangement; but it did not, and the two came to like each other, though both were interested in Clive.

Layton had the opportunity of comparing his two friends, which not to do would have been unlike his sex. Alice was faultless in features and complexion, but she had not the expressive eyes, animated countenance, and fascinating ways of her companion. It was while in this mood that Alice fully comprehended his feelings in regard both to Fanny and herself. A woman's instincts in such cases are far more sensitive than those of the other sex, and at the same time she is less likely to err in judgment, while on many other subjects her impulses might lead her to a wrong conclusion. Neither sex is likely to gain the whole truth without the assistance of the other, and for this reason woman should receive a broader culture, and a more varied experience than have generally been given to her.

The admiration he expressed in his countenance for Fanny was more than language could have done, and she turned quickly away lest he should see that she understood that look; but the pain Alice felt revealed to herself more than she cared to acknowledge. There was in her heart a feeling towards

Clive which she had only partially understood, until this little incident revealed it.

After the company had withdrawn and Alice was left alone to her reflections, she gave expression to her emotions by tears, but her feelings varied. She felt as a devoted sister would on discovering that she held a subordinate place in the affections of a dearly loved brother, but greater was her sorrow when she knew that Clive would never be more than a brother to her. Her love must remain unrequited in her heart and memory, but she would try to be reconciled. It required great self-command to speak of Fanny Sherwood the next day, when Clive called, but she did not let him know she had heard of his engagement; the secret belonged to him alone.

"She is very interesting and lovely," said Alice.

He thought if Alice could be so generous towards one who might be regarded a rival, she could have no other than a sisterly affection for him; but he erred in judgment, as many others have done when trying to fathom the depths of woman's nature with its wealth of affection.

No one suspected the struggles Alice concealed under a calm exterior, in attempting to conquer her emotions. She was gradually wearing away her life, with no witness to her sorrow except her Heavenly Father, and with no friend to sympathize with her, for her womanly pride concealed the truth. This, thought the sufferer, must be subdued; for it is wrong

to yield to such feelings, therefore she would occupy her time and thoughts with some useful and engrossing subject, in order to turn the current of her feelings into a new channel.

What should she do? was an important question. She had not cultivated a taste for reading, but she would do so now, as a relief to her thoughts. Then there was work to be done among the poor and the ignorant, and by assisting others, she would, perhaps, forget her own sorrows. She would become a "Sister of Mercy" without any outward symbol of her mission, and carry consolation to the afflicted, as her own experience would prepare her for this work. She asked the doctor to be allowed to accompany him in some of his professional calls, that she might know how and where to bestow her charity. Her uncle was surprised at the change in her habits and tastes, but the cause was a mystery to him and to all her friends.

Clive saw the change with pleasure, knowing that the great deficiency in Alice's character was enthusiasm in the pursuit of some noble aim, but he little dreamed of the cause that impelled her to act, or the motive that controlled her will. She pursued her plan, working and suffering, sometimes confident she had conquered, then in some unexpected manner her grief returned, afflicting her more remorselessly than ever. Her mother had died and to whom could she confide her secret sorrow? No, she would bear it alone. Her unremitting duties and unspoken grief began to affect

her health, always delicate. The bloom faded from her cheek, and her step was languid. She lost her natural cheerfulness, and at times appeared moody. Her friends were anxious about her health, and urged her to resign her self-imposed tasks.

Clive was more kind and attentive than ever when he saw Alice declining, and took special pains to divert her mind. He urged her to ride with him often, and sometimes she declined while at others she accepted his invitations to avoid awakening any suspicions in his mind. While in his presence, she would seem to be living in the past, and forgetting the present, but she could not trust herself to use the familiar terms of friendship in which they had been accustomed to address each other; if they ever trembled on her lips, she would check their utterance.

After these interviews followed her greatest mental sufferings. Though she enjoyed his presence, her judgment convinced her that her happiness required a complete separation. Some time after Clive's engagement to Fanny, he told Alice, thinking it would be a surprise to her. She had been expecting such a declaration, and had schooled her heart to bear it, still, when it did come, and that, too, from his own lips, it made her more unhappy than she expected, but her self-possession never deserted her. She was not only calm, but commended his choice, and expressed a sincere wish for their happiness.

A long life seemed to Alice a terrible thought, and

she began to look upon death as a desirable event, but which she feared might be delayed, as it generally is to those who most desire it.

What a change had suddenly come over her! A short time before, life seemed so pleasant and death so terrible, but now the prospect was different. How could she bear this sorrow she could not express, with no one to share it with her, to lighten its burden? She did not consider that time, change of place, and occupation might afford relief. A woman may conceal her grief from human eyes, and at times deceive even herself, but if her affections are blighted, neither time nor circumstances can wholly overcome it. She may give her hand, but her heart, in the ardor of its first love, she cannot give.

CHAPTER XVII.

SPRING.

"What wak 'st thou, Spring? Sweet voices in the woods,
And reed-like echoes that have long been mute."

EVERY trace of winter had disappeared, and spring burst forth with the freshness peculiar to New England. The copious rains which had suddenly swollen the mountain streams caused a "freshet" common in the northern regions, and the usual number of mills and bridges were swept away, large tracts of meadows had been covered with water and considerable damage was done to the town of Jefferson. The cellars and gardens on the lowlands were flooded and some of the inhabitants on awaking in the morning found themselves like a ship in mid ocean, surrounded by a "waste of waters." The river La Molle, named by French adventurers, who saw it during a mid-summer drought, was not what its name implies—it was neither slow, soft, nor sluggish, but during the abundant rains, it was subject to inundations which caused the inhabitants along its banks some trouble and losses. The bridge which spanned the river connecting the north and the south parts of the village had, on a similar occasion, been carried away while one of the citizens was crossing, so a freshet was

afterwards a warning to others to beware of the bridge.

The scenes presented after one of these inundations were desolate and ludicrous. Whole trees, broken fences, roots and dead branches of shrubs, old casks, or any loose articles in the way of the flood, with mud and sand, were hurried along and deposited in strange places. Grassy meadows were covered with unsightly *debris*, and deposits gathered on the way were left in door-yards and on walls and fences. On one occasion a housewife had her week's washing scattered for miles along the banks of the river, while some of her linen was discovered fluttering from tree tops as signals of disaster. Old shoes, baskets, rakes, tin pans, coffee pots, brooms, and barnyard gates were strewn along the banks for miles.

Some of these scenes had been witnessed on the opening of the spring of which we write, but now all traces of the reckless flood had disappeared, and the fields and meadows, enriched by deposits received from time to time, were carpeted with vivid green while the trees were assuming their summer vesture; the birds returning from their southern homes were making the forests vocal with their songs. The violets and early spring flowers were opening their petals, and giving their fragrance to the breeze. Both the animal and the vegetable creation seemed inspired with new life, on the return of the warm season. To no one were such days more joyful than to the young

folks at Glen Cottage. Anna and Lucy had been looking forward for weeks to the coming of spring, and intently watching every harbinger with eager interest. When evening came they would sit on the door-steps and listen for the first croak of the frogs, and when they heard this signal of the approaching season they danced with delight.

Lillie had waited patiently for the birds to "eat up the snow," as she expressed it, for then she could go out and find "booful fowers." At last their childish longing for the liberty of the fields was gratified.

After the close of the winter school, Arthur Walton had been added to the number of Mrs. Howard's pupils, and his presence was very pleasing to the little girls. He assisted them in their sports, and was appealed to as umpire in their little disputes, and the right to rule was conceded to him by all the party except Lucy, who sometimes disputed his claim to prominence by the right of his age and sex. When she appealed from his judgment, Mrs. Howard was the Supreme Court, whose decision she had learned to respect. Arthur, who was running over with fun, could not, sometimes, help teasing his young friends, but he found his match in Lucy. She enjoyed nothing better than boyish sports, and was always ready to join Arthur, but would quarrel with him every five minutes.

He would occasionally become impatient and declare he would never play with her again, but in a

short time would become as cheerful as ever, and resume his pranks. Sometimes Arthur would impose upon Lillie's confidence. She had the habit of removing her sunbonnet when playing out of doors, feeling it an encumbrance, as most children do. Her mother told her not to do it, but she either forgot the command or did not choose to remember it. The next time they were at play, she repeated the offence, when Arthur told her what he had often heard older persons say to children, which was, that a black man would come and carry her away if she took off her bonnet.

"Will he, Arthur?"

"Yes, Lillie."

"Won't I see mamma any more?"

"No."

"Nor Anna, nor Luty?"

"No; you will never come back again."

Lillie seemed very thoughtful for a moment, then put on her bonnet and returned to the house. Arthur called after her, but she insisted on going to her mamma.

"Does n't Lillie wish to play any longer?" inquired her mother.

"I 's a naughty dirl."

"What has my little daughter been doing?"

"I took off my bonnet."

"I 'm sorry Lillie has disobeyed her mamma."

"Will the black man tarry me off?"

"Who told you he would?"

"Art'ur."

"The black man will not carry you off, my child, but God will be displeased if Lillie disobeys her mother."

This assurance did not fully restore her confidence, and she kept close to her mother the remainder of the day, only leaving her to look out of the window as if watching for some one.

Mrs. Howard regretted the effect of Arthur's stratagem, but hoped the impression would pass off without further notice ; but a few days after Lillie went alone into the garden, after urging her mother to see that her bonnet was "tight." It was not long before Lillie's loud screams were heard, and she was seen running as fast as her little feet could carry her, with her bonnet thrown back, and her curls streaming in the wind.

"Mamma! mamma! the black man! I don't want to go with him. I will be a dood dirl."

The child, out of breath, ran to her mother's arms, trembling and out of breath, when a rap was heard at the door. This was the signal for another scream from the frightened child, as she believed the black man had really come for her. Upon opening the door, there stood Dan Woodard. Lillie was not mistaken, for she saw the black man and believed Arthur's words were true. She could not be quieted, and her mother was obliged to take her from the room, but it was some hours before she recovered from her fright.

Her mother told her that Mr. Woodard loved little children, and that he had little girls and boys who loved their papa, and that God made him with a black skin, and loved him just as much as if he was white.

"Did Dod make the little dirls and boys black?" inquired Lillie.

"Yes."

"Well, He should n't."

"Why not, Lillie?"

"'Tause I don't like 'em."

Mrs. Howard had always condemned the injurious practice of imposing upon the credulity of young children, to frighten them into obedience. To a sensitive child with a lively imagination, the injury might be incalculable; besides, the tendency of such a habit is to make children distrust others when they discover they have been deceived. As a faithful mother, she dreaded the time when her young family would be less under her own influence and exposed to the dangers of the world, but as that time would inevitably come, she would endeavor to prepare them for it. She told Arthur of the injurious consequences of trying to frighten children, and hoped he never would attempt to do it again, even in jest.

Fanny Sherwood found her young charge becoming more interesting every day. She was acquiring a love for teaching which she supposed she could never do, partly, perhaps, because it was to be Clive's profession, therefore she was determined to like what he

preferred, and be in sympathy with him. She had a fondness for children, and her quick sympathies enabled her to enter into all their little joys and sorrows by which she won their confidence and love. She was so child-like and buoyant in her feelings, that she seemed like a sister to them. They called her Aunt Fanny or Aunty, even Lucy and Arthur, as well as Anna and Lillie. A stranger would have smiled that so youthful and child-like a teacher should be called "Aunty." There were no symptoms of rebellion in her little school except occasionally from Lucy. It was not to be expected that so stormy a nature as hers would always be submissive. One day she became impatient because she failed to remember her lesson, and after repeated attempts to recite it, she threw her book across the room, saying she would n't try any longer.

"Take up your book," said Fanny.

"I won't," was the decided reply.

"You must, Lucy."

"I must n't, either."

"I can't love a little girl who talks and acts in this manner. Don't you wan't me to love you, Lucy?"

"No, I don't."

"You must go to your room, until you can obey."

She did not go, but remained defiant, until Mrs. Howard interfered and peremptorily bade her go to her room, and remain there until she was a better girl. Lucy had learned not to defy Mrs. Howard's

authority, for though the latter had been uniformly kind and reasonable in her discipline, she was firm and decided in carrying forward any measure she adopted. Her children always knew what to expect when she promised a reward or threatened a punishment. It was this certainty of her promise or threatening which secured submission, and Lucy had discovered the secret of her power before this incident. She felt that Mrs. Howard's displeasure was a severe punishment, for the affectionate though wayward child had given to her the love she would have felt for her own mother.

Lucy went to her room as bidden, and after a half hour's absence, returned, smiling, with no traces of passion remaining. She went to Mrs. Howard, placed her arms about her and promised to be a good girl.

"You must go and ask Fanny to forgive you as you disobeyed her."

Fanny was a favorite with Lucy, and many times a day would manifest her affection for her young teacher in her demonstrative way, though she was not always obedient.

Lucy hesitated, and her dark eyes began to show signs of displeasure.

"I don't want to," she said.

"Don't you love Fanny?"

"Yes, I do; but must I mind her?"

"In this case, you must, Lucy. She does not ask you to do what is not proper and easy for you."

"She ain't my mother," argued the child.

"No; I'm not your mother, yet you think it's proper to obey me."

"You are Anna's and Lillie's mother; Aunt Fanny is n't anybody's mother."

"Aunt Fanny is Anna's and Lillie's teacher, and they obey her."

"I 'll pick up the book if you 'll tell me to do it."

"No, you must do as I say, or go back to your room until you obey Aunt Fanny."

Lucy's pride had not been subdued, therefore she was obliged to return to her solitude. She shut the door violently and began to cry. Tea-time came, but she did not make her appearance, as she was not in a mood to comply with the terms of release. After supper the children were indulged in plays in which their mother and Fanny joined, and in which they always engaged with pleasure. No one had entered into these sports with greater delight than Lucy. She heard the joyous laugh of the children, and wished she could join them, and at the thought of their happiness and her own misery she began to cry, but her stubborn pride would not yield. The sports ended, then came the time for family worship, and Lucy heard the singing and then the subdued tone of Mrs. Howard as she led the family in their devotions, and wondered whether she would be left alone all night. How could she ask God to take care of her when she was so naughty? Would n't He put her

to death, and then she would never see her papa again?

"O dear, O dear, how dreadful! But I don't want to pick up the book. I don't want to ask Aunt Fanny to forgive me," and her tears and sobs were renewed.

As long as Mrs. Howard heard Lucy she purposely refrained from visiting her; but when she heard no sound from her room she thought the child might have fallen asleep, and went to see if this was true; but she had thrown herself upon the bed, and was still awake. When she saw Mrs. Howard she burst into tears, and placing her arms about her, sobbed violently, saying: –

"I will be a good girl, and mind Aunt Fanny if you will let me come out."

Mrs. Howard raised her in her arms, and kissing her, carried Lucy to Fanny, who had been pleading for and weeping over her obstinate little pupil.

When the child saw Fanny in tears, her obstinacy entirely gave way.

"I 'm sorry I have been a naughty girl. I 'll never do so again if you 'll love me. I will take up my book."

It had been left where she had thrown it. Sliding down from her teacher's arms, she cheerfully took up the obnoxious volume. It was a great triumph, and her next spasm of anger was less violent and prolonged.

When their daily tasks were finished, the children

were indulged in a ramble in the fields and woods, on pleasant days, with Fanny, and sometimes Mrs. Howard. This was a reward for diligence in their studies and good behavior, and to be deprived of the enjoyment was considered a severe punishment. Occasionally some one of the group, whose conduct had been particularly unbecoming, was left at home to repent in solitude, but the chastisement was so severe that it was not necessary to repeat it often. The excursionists always carried a basket in which to deposit specimens of flowers, mosses, leaves, pine cones, acorns, pieces of stone, or any other object of interest found in their rambles, and from these gathered treasures Mrs. Howard selected specimens as subjects for instructing her children. She was never at a loss for themes, as Nature has opened so vast and varied a library for her students. The insect species furnished a great variety of lessons to her young pupils, as well as the vegetable kingdom.

About forty rods from Glen Cottage was a brook named Cowslip Run, on account of the large number of cowslips on its banks. This brook, never dry, even in the warmest season, contained a large number of trout, and in one part of its course it was deep and broad, affording a favorite resort for the fishes. Here the children were accustomed to resort, to feed the "'ittle fisses," as Lillie said; so every day some crumbs of bread and all the flies which could be collected, were carried to the brook for that purpose.

The fishes were very tame and would come to receive their daily food without fear, since no angler had invaded their quiet pool. In this shady retreat, the children would spend hours, for below the pool the water was so shallow they could wade in it with safety. They would remove their shoes and stockings and go into the stream, and sometimes take an involuntary bath by slipping on the smooth pebbles, but they had never received any harm beyond a thorough drenching, as they were not allowed to go to the brook unattended by some older person.

One day Lucy went with Arthur to the brook without Mrs. Howard's knowledge, and as they were playing on the brink of the pool, she fell in, where the water was too deep for Arthur to wade, and he could not swim. What could he do? He was much frightened and thought of running back to the house for help, but in the mean time Lucy might be drowned before anyone could get there. He noticed she was carried by the deep current towards the shallow part of the stream, and by wading as far as it might be safe, he could seize hold of her dress and draw her to the shore. His plan was the best that could be adopted, and he succeeded in rescuing the child from drowning. When he reached the bank of the stream he thought she was dead. Her tangled and dripping hair fell over her shoulders, her eyes were closed, and she was unconscious. Arthur began to weep, for he felt that he had done wrong in taking

her to the brook, and allowing her to fall in. He had heard of persons being restored to life after they were supposed to be drowned, and thought if he could only get her to the cottage, her friends might restore her; therefore he would try to carry her to the house. With some difficulty he raised her in his arms and started up the steep bank. In their sports he had often done this without much difficulty, but now she seemed twice as heavy, and he thought he could never bear such a burden. When about half way home, he met Fanny who, having missed the children, went in pursuit of them. There was great commotion at the Cottage, when Lucy was brought there insensible, but remedies were applied which soon restored her to consciousness. After this accident, she and Arthur were less inclined to disputes. He treated her with more gentleness, and she was more willing to yield to his guidance. The event had an influence felt many years after, and Lucy always spoke of it as the time when she was drowned.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE YOUNG FOLKS.

"Green the land is where my daily
Steps in jocund childhood played."

ANNA HOWARD on certain occasions had manifested a selfish disposition, attended by a sullen spirit if her wishes were not gratified. This fault became more prominent, and Mrs. Howard felt that some forcible lesson was needed to correct it. The children had been promised a May party as soon as the weather was suitable for them to play out of doors. They were allowed to invite some of the neighbor's children and one of the party was to be May Queen. Anna had adopted the plan with great satisfaction, as she expected to be Queen, a right she claimed, though she had not been promised that honor. The question was, however, settled before the time of the party in a manner unexpected to Anna. Willie Howard was just beginning to walk, and his awkward attempts greatly amused the other children. His little babyish ways made him a coveted prize both to Anna and Lucy, when their rival claims occasionally led to disputes as to which should have the baby. Anna argued that he belonged to her, because he was her

brother, while Lucy urged her right to him on the ground that his mother was her mother since she came to live at the Cottage. One day a contest was waged between the claimants, when little Willie was in danger of great injury, as each combatant held one of his hands. The mother came to the rescue and took the child away, when Anna withdrew in a sullen mood, and Lucy, having got over her angry feelings, went to comfort her.

"Don't cry, Anna," said she, "we can play with our dolls to-day, and to-morrow we can have the baby."

"Go away," said Anna, "he is n't your brother. If you had n't come here, I could have him all to myself."

Lucy's fruitless efforts and chilling repulse led Mrs. Howard to see that some remedy must be applied to cure Anna's fault, therefore she took her aside for a moral lesson. She explained and illustrated the sin of selfishness, and told her how grieved she was to see her little daughter so often guilty of it, and she was sorry and ashamed to see her treat Lucy so rudely. She ought to be happy that she loved Willie so much; she had no dear little brother or sister to love and no mamma to love her, and that it was very unkind to wish her to go away. Mrs. Howard then told Anna she must punish her for her fault by not allowing her to be Queen of May, but that Lucy should be instead. Anna felt very keenly about the punishment, for she had anticipated much pleasure in acting in that

capacity, and had talked about it with much pride. Her mother knew it would be a great disappointment to refuse her the honor, therefore she had a struggle in her own heart between parental love and duty. Anna had been an obedient child, but her selfishness needed a check. She promised to be a better girl if her mother would only allow her to be Queen.

"My dear child, it is very hard for me to refuse you the honor, but it seems necessary for your good, therefore you must allow Lucy to occupy the position, and, when I find you have conquered your fault, I shall be happy to indulge you in some other way which will satisfy you for your disappointment."

"Must I go to the party? Can't I stay at home?"

"O yes, if you choose. But now you must ask Lucy to forgive you, but you cannot ask your Heavenly Father to care for you to night if you feel unkindly towards her."

Anna did as she was told, but she felt the disappointment, and regarded Lucy as her rival.

The children were to have a week's vacation, and preparations were made for their amusement, during the time. The services of Henry Walton were secured, to make their party as interesting as possible. Not far from Glen Cottage was a grove which had been the favorite resort for Mrs. Howard and her family, during the warm weather. In one part there was a mossy bank overshadowed by a growth of trees. By some effort, Henry had brought the supple

branches together and fastened them, thus forming a leafy arch above. He then constructed several rustic seats which Fanny adorned with moss. In front of this mound was a level space, sufficient for the children's sports, while in the rear of the arbor was room for the table to be placed for the entertainment.

Lucy sent invitations to her father and cousin Alice, while Anna invited her young friends in the neighborhood, and there was to be singing by the children, who had previously been instructed by Fanny. Mrs. Howard had furnished the tables, while Aunt Jenny did not allow the opportunity to pass for contributing to the happiness of others. Arthur was to be the Queen's attendant and, proud of the distinction, he acquitted himself gallantly. Dr. Clive came at an early hour with Alice who had been invited to spend some time at the Cottage with the hope that a change might improve her health. The day was warm and beautiful being the last of May, when the climate would admit of out-door recreations without detriment to health, and when Nature assumes her freshness tempting her votaries to her altar.

Anna, Lucy, and Lillie were dressed in white, Lucy wearing scarlet ribbons, and the others blue. A beautiful garland of violets had been prepared to adorn the queen, and laid on a bed of damp moss until the occasion called for its use. When Lucy was presented to her father, dressed for the party, with her large, dark eyes sparkling with animation, her

rich curls and fair brow, his heart beat with pride and affection at seeing her grace and beauty. She was in her happiest mood, and the Doctor was frequently reminded of the lost mother whom she so nearly resembled in looks and manners. It was a severe struggle for little Anna when she saw Lucy the chief object of attraction. A contest had been going on in her mind ever since her mother told her she could not be the Queen of the party, whether she would join the company or stay at home ; but when she saw the preparations going forward and every one interested, she could not resist the impulse to join them. Her mother, aware of the struggle in her heart, considered it best to allow her to follow her own course. The night before the party she told her mother she would like to go to the grove with the other children, and that she would try to be good and love Lucy. This was a partial relief to Mrs. Howard who would have regretted Anna's absence, but who felt she must carry out her plan if she would not lose the advantage gained or which she hoped to win.

The children had never attended a May festival before and the pleasure it afforded was as new as it was gratifying. They enjoyed with the zest of childhood the singing, the sports, and especially the refreshments provided for them, so when they returned to their homes, they were sure they never had had anything so delightful ; that Mrs. Howard was the best woman in the world ; that Fanny Sherwood was

charming, and that Dr. Clive had said the funniest things they had ever heard.

Mrs. Howard had been closely observing Anna during the day, and saw the tears that would sometimes fill her eyes and the strong effort she made to repress them; and when she noticed her daughter go to Lucy and kiss her, the mother's heart yearned to embrace her child. After the company had retired, she took Anna in her arms and wept, and when the daughter saw how her mother felt and suffered on her account, she expressed regret at having caused her grief, and promised to try and overcome her fault.

At the time in which the events of the story occurred, the manufacture of cotton goods, and to a considerable extent woolen fabrics, was superseding those of domestic production; still, some farmers adhered to the old method of raising flax and wool for home consumption, and among their number was Mr. Walton. Every spring a large supply of flax was dressed for spinning and weaving which required much labor and various processes to change the plant into cloth fit for use, and no little skill and patient labor from the farmers and their wives and daughters were required. The flax, after being pulled up from the ground, was placed where the moisture through the winter would render the stocks easily broken by a machine called a "brake," in order to separate the fibres from the stem, when it was "hatchelled," as it was called, a process by which the

"tow" was removed from the flax. This was carded and spun on what was called "a large wheel," while the flax was spun on a "little wheel," turned by the foot.

During the season of "spinning and weaving," Mrs. Walton was assisted by a girl hired for the purpose, while weaving the flax into linen cloth was performed by her own hands.

It was a busy time at the farmhouse of Mr. Walton, when one day the children at Glen Cottage were invited to see Arthur's mother spin and weave. It was no novelty to the Howard children, but Lucy had never seen much of farm life, and a visit to the Waltons afforded her great pleasure. There were so many new things to be seen, and Aunt Jenny took so much pains to make her happy, always taking her part in her disputes with Arthur, that these visits were often repeated.

On this occasion, Mrs. Walton was spinning flax, and Mary Allen, tow.

"See Lucy," said Arthur, "see how these flyers go. You can't catch them."

Lucy, who never received a challenge without accepting it, extended her hand to stop the buzzing spindle, but fortunately was arrested by Mrs. Walton, in time to save her fingers from being badly lacerated.

"What a naughty boy you are," said his mother, "Do you want to hurt the child?"

"I did n't think she would do it."

"Lucy has never seen so much of spinning and weaving as you have."

While Lucy stood looking intently at the wheel, thinking it very wonderful, what should make it go round, Arthur quietly wound one of her curls around a button on his jacket. Soon she saw something that interested her and darted off with characteristic impetuosity, but found herself suddenly checked. Nothing will irritate a quick temper like having the hair pulled, therefore she was very indignant, while in her efforts to free herself, she only increased her trouble. Mrs. Walton came to her rescue, and after some delay succeeded in releasing the struggling captive. Arthur received a box on the ear, but that did not appease Lucy's anger, when she rushed at Arthur who, pretending to be alarmed, ran about the room pursued by the irritated child. Suddenly turning, Arthur caught her in his arms, and this increased her anger, and when released, she bestowed upon her tormenter kicks and blows to no purpose.

In the midst of the tumult, Mr. Walton came into the room and said, "What 's all this noise about? Arthur, what are you doing?" He had released Lucy, and they both stood quietly, looking at Mr. Walton.

"I was having a little fun, father. Lucy and I love each other very much."

"I don't love you," she replied, snapping her black

eyes, but was restrained from making any further war-like demonstration by Mr. Walton's presence.

"Go to the garden, Arthur; Henry has work for you. Lucy, don't you want to see the little pigs?"

The transition from anger to joy was as rapid in Lucy's feelings as an electric flash. Her scowl gave place to a smile, when she said she did wish to see them.

"May me go too?" spoke a little voice from a corner.

"Is that you, Lillie, my pet? Come here," taking her in his arms. "Have you come to live with me?"

"Mamma tould n't spare me."

"Then you must give me a kiss." She placed her little arms around his neck and kissed him. "Now you shall ride on my shoulders to see the pigs. Anna and Lucy may go on foot."

Before they arrived at the barn where the pigs were kept, Arthur, who could not work while any sport was going on, joined the company, and he played "tag" with Lucy on friendly terms. There were six little white pigs.

"Oh, what pretty little piggies," said she. "I wish I could take one of them," at the same time she began to climb to the top of the pen.

"Where are you going?" inquired Arthur.

"To get one of the pigs."

"No, you must n't, the old mother will bite you," said Mr. Walton.

"Will she? O, take me down quick," screamed Lucy, as the old hog came towards her with open mouth.

"There, now, you are safe," placing her on the barn floor. "You must never try to get into a pigsty again."

"See these calves," said Anna. "How they love to run."

Arthur had slipped into their enclosure and released the four sleek calves from their moorings. They were running back and forth and seemed delighted for the opportunity to strengthen their limbs.

As the party left the barn the old gobbler stood ready to escort them with his pompous strut and noise, much to the terror of the children. Arthur had been in the habit of teasing him so that he became very pugnacious and would attack anyone who was afraid of him. He was feared by all the children of the neighborhood, and Mr. Walton had threatened him with capital punishment.

"Let us go down to the brook and see the goslings," said Arthur.

The brook was not far from the barn, and thither the parent geese piloted their young charge, almost as soon as they burst from the egg-shell, to test their aquatic powers. Two gray geese and two white ganders had been the parent stock on the Walton farm, for several years, while additions made yearly to the family had been disposed of, a part to supply the dinner table of some epicure, others to set up house-

keeping on different farms, while many an unlucky wanderer had been seized by that foe of domestic fowls, the fox.

As the children approached the brook they saw with delight the old geese and a flock of goslings that looked like a mass of yellow down, all swimming gracefully around their parents.

"O see, the doose puts his hands behind him," said Lillie.

"Those are his feet," remarked Anna. "Don't you see his toes are joined together so he can use them to swim?"

"Can you swim, Arthur?" inquired Lucy.

"Not much, but Henry can."

"Then his toes are joined?"

"How silly! Boys don't swim like a goose," replied Arthur, somewhat piqued.

He removed his shoes and stockings and waded into the pool of still water and took up a handful of little creatures.

"What have you got, Arthur?"

"Don't you know what polliwogs are? Where have you lived all your days? Take them."

"No," said Lucy, shrinking from them.

"Let me see the wolly-pogs," said Lillie, holding out her hand.

Arthur placed them in it, but they were too slippery to stay, and glided to the ground, where they wriggled for a time.

"O, do put them into the water again," pleaded Anna.

"They will die."

"I want them to die," said Arthur. "They kill goslings."

"How can these little things kill goslings?"

"Why, the goslings eat them, and it causes their death."

"The polliwogs become frogs, and we like to hear them sing," replied Anna.

"How do the little frogs sing?" inquired Arthur.

"It 's deep, it 's deep!" said Anna.

"How do the big frogs sing?"

"Then you may go round," imitating the sounds of the frogs as nearly as she could.

The children amused themselves until supper-time, when Henry was sent for them. They returned to the house, and were surprised to find Mrs. Howard, Alice, Fanny, and Willie already there. Faces and hands must be washed and straggling locks brushed, before the little party was presentable at table.

Mrs. Howard had been very careful to teach her children to behave well at table. Good manners at meals, she maintained, was a proof of one's breeding. To be slovenly, awkward, and rude there made others uncomfortable and disgusted. It was a duty to teach a child old enough to sit at table to behave with propriety, and if any of her family transgressed her rules, after being duly instructed, she was at once sent away

to finish her meal alone, after the others had finished theirs. Some parents excuse their negligence by saying that when the children become older they will be ashamed of their ill manners and correct them, without taking into account the discomfort of others, or the mortification it causes the children in later times.

No housekeeper was ever annoyed to have the Howard children sit at her table, or to come into her parlor for fear of having articles misplaced, as they were never allowed to take into their hands anything not their own, without permission.

Master Willie was permitted to join the others at tea, and Arthur's high-chair had been brought from the attic for the purpose.

"It's a beautiful sight," said Mr. Walton, "to see so many pretty and well-behaved children around the table. See, mother," addressing his wife, "how many house-flowers you have. These little girls are prettier than any lossoms you have in your garden."

His love for little girls was intense, especially after the loss of their daughters. Anna had been frequently at his home, and Henry was fond of her. He liked her quiet ways and was pleased with her intelligence, while she regarded him as an older brother.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

"She folded up the dream in her deep heart,
Her fair, full lips were silent on that smart."

ALICE and Fanny, after the first sensation of jealousy, gradually became firm friends. They liked each other at first, on Clive's account. Alice liked Fanny because Clive did, and Fanny loved Alice because she was his cherished friend; but as the two girls became more intimately acquainted, a stronger tie of friendship bound them together. Fanny's vivacity and uniform cheerfulness had a salutary influence on Alice, while the affectionate and confiding disposition of Alice, her patient suffering and loneliness, won the sympathy and admiration of everyone. Mrs. Howard discovered that she was suffering from a depression of spirits, for, naturally ingenuous, even to a fault, it was difficult for her to conceal her real feelings even from her intimate friends, whom they so nearly concerned. However, she resolutely determined to hide her secret, cost what it might, for she believed the happiness of Clive and Fanny more or less depended upon it. Had they understood her purpose, it would have been an occasion of deep

regret, and might have caused them unhappiness, as Alice thought it would. It may seem incredible that she could be friendly to one who was unconsciously reminding her of the hidden sorrow; yet it was a pleasure to Alice to be near Fanny and trying to promote her happiness.

Letters passed frequently between Clive and Fanny, and Alice, also, received them from her friend, who addressed her in the same kind, genial manner of their early days. In this way she was constantly reminded of the time when they regarded each other with brotherly and sisterly affection. Mrs. Howard noticed that Alice always seemed depressed in spirits after hearing from Clive, and absorbed with her own thoughts. One day they were in the arbor when Henry brought them letters, each bearing the same postmark and written in the same hand. There was no doubt from whom they came. Fanny eagerly broke the seal and read the magical words of her letter, while Alice gazed long and musingly on hers, but instead of opening it at once, she placed it in her pocket.

"Alice, where's your letter? Have you not read it?" said Fanny.

"Not yet. I thought I would wait until you had read yours."

"What a strange little prude you are, Alice. When I get a letter I can hardly wait to open it, I'm so anxious to read it. I have some news to tell you.

Perhaps Clive has written the same to you. Please open your letter and see."

Alice drew forth her letter and read it. "I don't find anything specially important. What is in your letter?"

"I've a mind not to tell you for a day or two, Miss Propriety."

"I have n't the same reason for being in haste that Birdie has, and as to the news, it will not distress me very much if I do wait."

"Seeing you care so little about it, I 'll tell you, then; Clive is coming to Jefferson in his vacation, to see his cousins, of course. Besides, he will be accompanied by his friend, Paul Crawford, to see — well, the fine scenery," looking archly at Alice. "Crawford is to go to the lake, he says, but Clive does n't say whether he intends to accompany his friend."

"Of course he does n't. Do you suppose there is nothing here more attractive than the lake? He could not leave his enchantress long enough for that."

"How singular if both Paul and Clive should become enchanted," replied Fanny.

"Here is my letter, you may read it, lest you become jealous," said Alice.

Fanny read the letter and returning it said, "It is just like him, so noble, kind and thoughtful.

"Fanny, you do not fully understand Clive yet? do not be surprised, I mean his virtues. We have been friends from childhood, and I believe there are

few men like him. His devotion to his mother is the promise of what he will be to his wife."

"Dear, generous Alice, I love you for this. It is just what I think of Clive. Do you expect me to allow you to read my letter, as I have read yours?"

"No, Fanny, it would be wrong. What passes between lovers should never be read by other people. When the secrets of the heart are revealed, it would be sacrilege for others to behold."

"There's noble Alice again. May you know from experience how to appreciate so generous a sentiment."

"My dear Fanny, there are mysteries connected with our private histories, I cannot understand, and did I not believe our Heavenly Father is supremely good, I might doubt his justice in some of his dealings with his children."

"Clive told me you had lost your father and a devoted mother."

"Yes; I feel alone in the world; but loss of friends is not the greatest affliction that may come to us, for we hope to be united to them in a better world; but there are some troubles for which there seems to be no remedy."

"Will not our Heavenly Father send one?"

"Aunt Fanny, Cousin Alice, come to tea," said a voice, and Lucy came rushing towards the two friends, while her ringing laugh startled the birds from their coverts.

Mrs. Howard believed a home without flowers

would be wanting in one of the most agreeable sources of pleasure, therefore, from her first settlement in her new home, she gave some portion of her time to their cultivation. In this employment, she was joined by her husband, who believed that a few minutes devoted to the occupation were not lost. Within a few years after their settlement at the Cottage, they had the pleasure of seeing it surrounded with ornamental trees, while the plot of ground assigned to the growth of flowers was tastefully adorned with a variety of plants. The children imbibed their mother's love of flowers.

Henry Walton assisted in preparing the flower beds, while Mrs. Howard and Fanny planted the seeds, transplanted the roots, and arranged them to their tastes.

"What are you going to do with these sunflower seeds, Paulina?" inquired Fanny.

"Plant them beyond this wall. They must stand in the rear, as they would be too obtrusive in front."

"Why plant them at all? Sunflowers are so large and conspicuous; I do not see any beauty in them," said Fanny.

"It seems to me that the sunflower ought to belong to the genus heliotrope instead of the helianthus, since it turns itself to the god of day, and follows him though his course," said Alice. "You know the story of the beautiful Clytie?"

"What is it?" inquired Fanny.

"She pined and died on account of her love of Apollo, and was transformed into a heliotrope, according to some versions of the story, and according to others, into a sunflower."

"That is a pretty story, though sad for the poor nymph," said Fanny. "I will never again despise the sunflower, but I prefer to think that the goddess was changed into the little modest, fragrant flower known as the heliotrope."

"For a better reason I prefer the sunflower," said Mrs. Howard. "Harvey always liked to see it growing. He said it was an emblem of the Christian's faith. Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, and the Christian turns towards him just as this flower does to the natural sun."

"See kitty sitting up on her feet watching the butterfly," said Anna, "but she can't reach it. See how high it flies!"

"The butterfly is descending to kitty," observed Mrs. Howard.

After flying around the kitten several times, coming nearer each time, it was within pussy's reach, when she gave a spring and seized the poor little victim.

"This is an object lesson to teach us how foolish it is to run needlessly into danger," said Fanny.

"Yes; and into temptation," added Mrs. Howard, "as was the case with Amelia Hayford."

"What about her?" inquired her sister.

"I will relate her history after the children are

asleep. It is a sad one, and I fear may have a tragical end. She was at Mr. Walton's the other day, and that was the reason I thought of her when you spoke of the butterfly."

As soon as the season was suitable Mrs. Howard planted flowers and shubbery about her husband's grave, and placed a modest stone with a simple inscription to mark the spot. Burying places in the country were sadly neglected; rude fences or stone walls falling down in places formed their only protection against stray cattle, while blackberry-bushes, wild cherry-trees, spruces, and ferns grew in profusion among the graves. Not one was decorated with flowers; not a shade tree had been planted by the hand of affection in the cemetery where Harvey Howard's remains were buried until his wife had them planted there. The neighbors considered it a whimsical fancy, utterly useless.

"What possible good can it do to the dead?" said they. "One can mourn for them just as much, while the departed can neither know anything about trees or flowers."

"We are not sure of that," replied Mrs. Howard. "It may be they know something of the home and friends they have left, and it may add to their happiness that they are not forgotten; besides it keeps them fresh in our memories to be offering these little mementoes to their worth. It makes us feel they are not dead, only gone away, and that they will be restored

to us at some future time." One day as Mrs. Howard was preparing fresh flowers for her husband's grave, Fanny inquired whether she might accompany her, when her sister hesitated.

"I understand, you do not wish it, Paulina. You wish to be alone when communing with the departed, speaking metaphorically."

"Not exactly that. Cannot you sometimes seemingly hold communication with your absent friends?"

"I often do, especially those I dearly love."

"Yes, and Harvey is only absent to my sight. When at his grave, I feel that could I only lift the veil, I should see him."

"These are consoling thoughts," said Alice, who had been listening with fixed attention. "I often wish I could visit my dear mother's grave. Oh, how I miss her." The tears were in her eyes which fell upon the wreath of flowers she had gathered for her friend who took the flowers and, tenderly kissing her, said:—

"We are companions in sorrow; let us try to bear each other's burdens, and thus lighten our own."

Instead of depressing her spirits, a visit to her husband's grave was consolation and strength to Mrs. Howard. She there renewed her consecration to her life-work, and whenever her burdens were very depressing, she would repair to the sacred spot and receive fresh courage.

CHAPTER XX.

FARM LIFE.

"The farmer's life displays in every part
A moral lesson to the sensual heart."

Most farmers kept sheep for their own use, and a few had large flocks to supply wool for the market. The practice of "washing the sheep" as it was called, before shearing them, was an event of some importance and excitement, especially to the boys. As soon as the weather was warm enough, the farmers made preparations for "the washing" which was generally done in companies uniting together, when several flocks mingled and their owners joined in the labor, until all the sheep had been bathed.

The children were promised the pleasure of witnessing the scene, which was to them a novelty. The day was bright and warm. A temporary fold had been constructed on the banks of Bell Brook, and thither the flocks of several of the neighbors were driven. Each owner's initial letter had been painted on his sheep, so that the W's, the C's, the A's, etc., were known to belong to Walton, Cutler, Allen, or others. John and Henry Walton assisted in the "rushing," but Arthur had his father's directions to care

for the little girls, and keep out of mischief. The latter injunction was disregarded.

"Arthur, see that Lion"— the dog — "is shut up. We don't want his services." But when the time came, Lion could not be found. With a dog's instincts he had preceded the company and was starting up the birds and squirrels, rods ahead. Arthur felt he must pretend to drive the dog back, so he whistled and called, not very loudly, to be sure ; but Lion, usually obedient to the wishes of his young master, only stopped, looked at him, scratched the ground, and barked around an old stump for an imaginary weasel, then started off over the fence into the pasture taking the shortest course to the brook, as if he understood perfectly well what all the preparations meant.

Arthur gave up the attempt to drive Lion back, though he was glad that the dog insisted upon going. He thought it would be such nice fun to have him swoop down upon the flock, and see the sheep scour across the pasture, pell mell.

The sheep, some more than one hundred, with half as many lambs, were all crowded into the pen, trembling and bleating, not knowing what would be their fate, while the little lambs, separated from their mothers, cried most piteously. The washers would seize a victim, mute and unresisting, drag it up and down through the water, until its fleece was thoroughly drenched, when it was brought to land, and another took its place, the lambs keeping up their crying all

the time. The sheep evidently did not relish their involuntary ablutions, for they stood shivering and looking miserable. What small brains they had were puzzled, for they did not seem to know their own offspring.

The children pitied the lambs and their frightened mothers, and wept as they witnessed the scene. Lucy said she did not want to see them drown the sheep, and she would go home, while Anna thought it was wicked to treat the poor creatures so. They both went home, leaving Arthur to enjoy the scene, who, being relieved of some part of his responsibility, thought a little "fun" would come in nicely. Lion had been on his good behavior though he was restless with an eager desire to join in the sport, but Mr. Walton had before noticed his presence. Arthur whispered in the dog's ear when instantly he was in the midst of the flock on the bank of the stream. The consternation of the sheep and lambs was beyond control. Their fear only stimulated Lion and it required all the men to check him, but nothing could calm the frightened sheep. Mr. Walton understood the cause of the disturbance, and though not often angry with Arthur for his mischievous pranks, yet when the boy disobeyed him as in this instance, he sometimes felt what he considered a "righteous indignation." He did not indulge in harsh language, but restraining his feelings he quietly said, "Arthur, go home and I will see you when I return." The

boy understood what that meant, but excused his conduct to himself, by thinking he had tried to drive Lion back but he would not go, and that he did n't suppose the sheep would be afraid of him.

He dreaded the time when his father would come home, but hoped he might forget his implied threat. "He won't though, he never does," the boy said to himself. He did not tell his mother what had occurred, but he appeared more thoughtful, and was so anxious to please her, she imagined there was something wrong.

The "sheep washers" did not finish their labors until the afternoon, and when Mr. Walton returned, Arthur became more anxious; but when he perceived no difference in his father's manner towards him, hoped he had forgiven his boy. The time for supper came and the father was cheerful as usual. When relating the events of the day, no allusion was made to Arthur's conduct, and though the boy watched him closely, he could not detect a single glance of the eye that would lead him to suppose the morning's affair was remembered. After their meal was over and Aunt Jenny was busy with her domestic cares, Mr. Walton said in a low and gentle voice, "Arthur, we will go to the barn." What happened there was a secret between Arthur and his father. There were no loud words, no discordant sounds of any kind, but there were traces of tears on the boy's cheeks when he returned to the house, and a prompt, cheerful obedience for a long time after. No father was re-

spected and loved by his sons more than Mr. Walton, and no one was, perhaps, more exacting in requiring implicit obedience than he. The love of his children was based on respect for him and his parental authority, which they could not have felt had he weakly yielded.

After their fleeces were dry, the "shearing" of the sheep followed. This operation was performed in the barn, as follows: The sheep entered richly dressed in woolly clothing, looking plump and respectable, but, like some human beings who, after going through a "fleecing" process by their fellow creatures, come from the hands of the "shearers" destitute of clothing, looking mean and poor. Sheep were not the only domestic animals stripped of their clothing every year. Geese underwent the same process several times in the course of the warm season, though in the case of the latter it was only partial.

"My geese must be 'picked,'" said Mrs. Walton a few days after the "shearing." "They are shedding all their feathers. Henry, drive them into the barn, and I'll attend to them." She then proceeded to relieve them of some of their superabundant feathers. One of the old ganders was first caught. He was a lusty fellow, and had fought many a battle with Reynard, and always conquered. He had led his flock more than a dozen years, always claiming the two geese as his wives, driving away his crest-fallen male companion; therefore he made a violent resistance against the degradation of being "plucked."

Aunt Jenny tied his wings, and drew a stocking over his head to avoid his sharp bill, but the old warrior struggled until he gained control of his wings which he flopped so vehemently that he sent the feathers flying in all directions. He bit his tormenters in spite of the stocking, and when Aunt Jenny gave his feathers a more vigorous pull he cried, "Stop," "Stop."

"Give it to him, mother," said Henry. "I should like to see him beaten for treating poor Dicky so:" This was the crest-fallen gander.

It took some time to get through with the patriarch, and when he was set free he was so ashamed and humbled that he never offered to fight Dicky for more than a month, while the latter had the unspeakable honor of waiting upon the geese without molestation. The rest of the flock submitted to the operation with less resistance.

CHAPTER XXI.

MILLIE.

"This love is of the brain, the mind, the soul."

A FEW days after the conversation in the garden, when reference was made to Amelia Hayford, she made her appearance at the Cottage with her child.

"Why, Millie, how did you get here with your baby?"

"He did n't know we came. We rode on a sunbeam; did n't we, baby? There, there, 'Hush, my child, lie still and slumber,'" singing the hymn to her babe. "He shan't carry you away, Love. We, baby and Millie, are going up there. He cannot come."

"Let me see your baby," said Mrs. Howard.

"You won't give it to him, will you?"

"Certainly not, Millie," taking the child from the mother's arms, and removing its outside clothing. "What is your baby's name?"

"Love. He loved me once. They said he had a wife. Do they marry up there?"

"The Bible says they do not, but are as the angels."

"He will not be an angel, then."

Turning to Fanny, whom she had never seen before, she said, "Do you know him?"

"No."

"I thought you were his wife. They said she was pretty. Is that your baby?" referring to Willie Howard.

"I have no baby. I am not married."

"They say we were not married, but we were. He said he loved me then. Did you ever love any one, pretty lady?"

Fanny blushed, and did not know what to say, when her sister told her to humor her fancy and give her an answer.

"Yes, Millie."

"Did he go away?"

"No."

"But he will, dear; don't believe him."

After talking in this manner, half wild and incoherent, she started to leave.

"Where are you going, Millie?" inquired Alice.

"Going up there. He can't find us there. They won't let him come."

"Wait a while, and have tea with us," said Mrs. Howard. She had secretly sent Arthur to his father for some one to conduct her home, fearing she might do some harm to herself and child.

John Walton soon made his appearance with his wagon, but they had some difficulty at first to persuade her to go with him. She protested, saying they would take her to him, but on being assured to the contrary, she consented, and was conveyed to her father.

Amelia was the youngest child of Deacon Hayford. She was pretty, but wilful, and had been much indulged by her fond parents, being the only child left at home.

A year before, a stranger came to the village, who gave his name as Seymour Osborn, and claimed to be a land agent for a large and wealthy company in New York. He boarded at the hotel, and seemed to be very prodigal of his money. He appeared to be about thirty years of age, and was prepossessing in appearance, and with fascinating manners.

Amelia was soon interested in the handsome stranger, and his special attentions to her won her heart. He would accompany her in her walks which became frequent and prolonged. They would stroll on the banks of the river by moonlight, when he would declare his love for her. These interviews had occurred some time before the parents became aware of them, when they forbade Amelia holding any further intercourse with him, until they were satisfied of his honorable intentions, and that he could give testimonials of his good character, as there were suspicious that he was not what he claimed to be. Amelia had never been denied whatever she desired, and now that her affections had become deeply involved, she was not disposed to yield her will to her parents. She met Osborn clandestinely, whose purpose at first was not to marry her, but being opposed by her friends he determined to be avenged.

An elopement was planned, and they were married in a neighboring town. He took his bride to his boarding place where they remained six weeks, when one day a stranger appeared at the hotel, who had known something of Osborn's previous history. The next day the bridegroom absconded, leaving his bride, and unpaid bills. The stranger explained the cause of his unaccountable conduct. Osborn, who had assumed a false name, had embezzled the funds of the company, and, besides, had a wife and child in one of the Western cities.

The news to poor Amelia was terrible, and with a broken heart, she sought refuge in her father's house. She became melancholy, and after the birth of her child, her despondency increased, until she lost her reason, though she had sane moments when she would talk as rationally as in former years. Her love for her infant was her strongest passion. She always spoke of Osborn as he, and her friends as they; the child she called Love. After the birth of her infant, she would wander with it on the banks of the river, where her husband had often walked with her, and would sometimes be found there late at night with her infant closely folded in her arms, and at other times she would sit and gaze for hours into the water of the brook, talking to *him* or to her babe. Later, she wandered from her home, through fear that *he* would come for her child, and was constantly talking of "going up there," pointing to the skies.

About three weeks after her appearance at Glen Cottage, one day she was missing. The village was searched for the unfortunate one; messengers were sent to every part of the town, but no traces of her could be found. After some days of fruitless searching, some one discovered a baby's hood on the bank of the stream, which proved to belong to Amelia's child. The truth was revealed: the insane mother had thrown herself and babe into the river, and both were drowned. Doubtless it was her desire to "go up there," as she expressed it, beyond the reach of her deceiver.

The bodies were recovered after a long search, but the afflicted parents were nearly crushed under the fearful blow. The sad fate of one so young and promising cast a gloom over the whole village, but none of her acquaintances felt it so keenly as Alice. Ever after Amelia's cruel desertion, Alice had been to her a "Sister of Charity." She had frequently visited her and tried to impart consolation to her wounded spirit. Before her reason was lost, Alice was encouraged to believe that Amelia found a resting place for her afflicted heart in the Saviour's tender love.

After Fleety was sold, Mrs. Howard occasionally accompanied the Waltons to church. The Sabbath after the sad occurrences just narrated, Mr. Walton took his wife, Mrs. Howard, Anna, and Arthur to the village church in his family wagon. John walked, and Henry remained at home to keep Fanny and

the younger children company. Alice and Lucy rode with Dr. Clive who called for them. Mr. Walton's carriage was constructed for carrying a large number of passengers; it had two seats, each affording accommodation for three persons. The colt behaved well beside old Pete but never was trusted alone to carry women and children. True, he would frisk, caper, and sometimes throw up his heels when going down hill, and otherwise behave indecorously, much to the displeasure of old Pete, the terror of Aunt Jenny, and the amusement of Arthur, but no harm ever came from his antics. Lion always accompanied the family to church, and would mount the wagon seat, as guard, until the services were finished, when he generally fell in the rear and trotted as demurely behind as any Puritan dog would, though on other days he would run, leap over fences and bark like others of his species.

There was only one church in the town, though religious services were held in school-houses on Sundays and occasionally on other days of the week. The meeting-house, as it was called, was a wooden building, painted white, with a row of sheds in the rear for the accommodation of the horses. The interior was without carpet or any decoration, while the pulpit was very high and looking as if made to check any oratorical display by the preacher, while the choir in the gallery opposite were much nearer heaven than the occupants in the pews below.

A larger congregation than usual had assembled on account of the tragical event that had just occurred. Some came from sympathy, more from curiosity, while a few were present because they secretly rejoiced in the misfortunes of their superiors. It is a strange perversity of human nature that any one should exult over the misfortunes of others, but any one acquainted with the world is aware of the fact. When Deacon Hayford, with his silver locks, and form bowed with the double weight of grief and years, his stricken wife leaning upon his arm, entered the church, every eye turned to see them, and many cheeks were moistened with tears, and even the curious were moved to pity. Mr. Goodell's subject was the sympathy of Jesus for the afflicted. The sermon was comforting to those burdened with cares and sorrows, and how few are not at some period of their lives. Mrs. Howard applied the subject to her own case, Alice to hers, while many others in the congregation could, with equal propriety, make a personal application of the sermon.

Attending church both in the morning and afternoon with only a short intermission between the exercises, was very wearisome to children, especially as they could understand no part of the sermon. The more restless were anxiously waiting to hear the "Amen" long before the close. Since children form a part of every congregation, it is just that some of the sermons, or portions of them, should be especially

addressed to them in language adapted to their understanding. It is not strange that young people, especially boys, should dislike to attend church, when they are compelled to sit still so long with nothing to interest them but their own vague thoughts. A great change has been effected in these conditions in modern times, so that the young are now taught by instructive books, lessons, and sermons on the subjects of morals and religion.

Arthur could never keep still long at a time, therefore he found it difficult to repress his fun, while Anna looked tired and impatient. Now and then a child would notice a word of which it had some idea of its meaning, but would associate with it a very strange and incongruous idea. Once when the hymn, "O to grace, how great a debtor," etc., was read, Arthur asked his mother whether that meant little Grace Goodell, who sat before him and often turned round and threw kisses to him, and whether the debtor in his father's account book meant the same as that in the Bible, and whether in the hymn, "Here I raise my Ebenezer," meant Eben Parker when he fell from his horse. Anna had counted all the palm leaves on Mrs. Merill's shawl for the twentieth time, and wondered why such clumsy figures were called leaves; she was surprised that Mrs. Jones did n't brush the dust from the folds of her black silk dress. Then she heard Mr. Goodell use the word selfish, and supposed he knew what a selfish girl she had been.

"O dear, I wonder what Lillie is doing; I wish it was night," she said to herself.

Arthur began to feel very hungry, and wished he had a piece of his mother's pie. "When I get home," thought he, "I will eat a whole one. I wonder whether Henry fed my cosset. Won't I pull Lucy's curls, for hiding my cap," and he looked round to see whether she read his thoughts, but her father had judiciously left her at home for the afternoon. He did not wish people disturbed in their devotions by her restlessness. At length the long-wished-for "Amen" came, and Arthur, seizing his cap, wriggled his way down the aisle through the moving column of men and women, that he might be the first to leave the church. He felt like a caged bird set free. Lion was equally pleased to see his master, and jumping from his post skipped about to express his joy.

The different teams drove up to the church steps to receive their loads. There were 'Squire Baldwin's sleek horses looking as well-fed as their master; here was Mr. Cutler's team thoroughly brushed and washed; yonder was Dan Woodard's one-eyed horse with wagon thills tied with a rope. Finally, the last team started for home, some going one way, some another, but all eager, both man and beast, to break a long fast.

CHAPTER XXII.

FORESHADOWINGS.

"What fond, strange yearnings, from the soul's deep cell,
Gush for the faces we no more may see."

JUNE, sweet, balmy June, the month of roses, came with its sunny skies, its soft air, and its freshness of verdure. The two young friends, Alice and Fanny, improved the pleasant days in roaming through the woods and fields, or sitting in the arbor reading or sketching. With such a friend and surrounding scenes, Alice began to recover strength and bloom. She was apparently serene, but the trouble with her own heart was still going on. Sometimes the tender care of her friends, the beauty of nature, and the content of irrational creatures almost oppressed her.

"Why cannot I be happy as well as these?" she said to herself. "Why were we created with such capacities for loving the good and the beautiful and then have them repressed and blighted?" She could find no solution for the mystery, for the reason that none can be found in this life. These belong to the wonders of the Divine dispensations.

As the two friends were sitting in the arbor one day, a gentle breeze rustled through the pine trees.

"Fanny, of what does the wind in the pine boughs remind you?"

"It resembles very much the distant roar of the ocean," was the answer. "When the wind blows hard, it reminds me of standing on the beach and hearing the waves as they approached and then receded from the shore."

"I have never been to the sea-shore," said Alice, "but I am always reminded of the presence of departed spirits. The idea is not original, but it agrees with my own views. It affords me a melancholy pleasure to sit in this grove and commune with the spirit of my mother. I feel that

> "'Her form angelic hovers near,
> And comes in dreams alone to me.'"

"Dear Alice, do not allow your thoughts to dwell on subjects that depress your spirits. Now I have some pleasant news to tell you."

"What is it, Birdie? You are always so cheerful that you can have nothing but good news."

"What do you suppose I am working so diligently on this sketch every leisure moment for, sweet Innocence?"

"To see how it will look when finished; that is what I should do."

"How artless! Do you not understand Clive's tastes?"

"A true woman you are. Your identity is merged

in that of another. But why should you be in such haste?"

"Because I expect two knights-errant this way in a few days, and this must be finished. Clive does not forget that I have been his pupil, and he takes the liberty of giving his commands to do this and not do that. Among other possible things, he wishes me to practice drawing."

"I don't see how you find time to sing, draw, sew, make bread, cultivate flowers, etc.," replied Alice.

"I should not feel qualified to superintend my home, if I did not."

"If Clive is going to bring company, I must go home to superintend uncle's household. I shall be glad when my new aunt comes to take my place," said Alice.

"How can we spare you, Alice?" inquired Fanny.

"My place will be more than supplied by another. A more entertaining companion will attend you, anticipate your wishes, and make you as happy as possible."

Mrs. Howard had noticed with pleasure the effort Anna was constantly making to conquer her faults, though it caused the child many severe struggles in which she was sometimes overcome. Dr. Clive had invited her to spend a few weeks with Lucy at his home, when Layton and his friend came, thinking this arrangement would relieve Fanny of her young charge, and please the little girls. Mrs. Howard con-

sented to the plan, as she had promised Anna at the May party some unexpected pleasure when she had corrected her faults.

"My daughter," said she drawing her close to her side, "I have seen your attempts to subdue your selfishness, and it has made me happy to know that you are succeeding so well. As a reward, I have given my consent to allow you to go home with Lucy, if you wish."

"O yes, mother, I do want to go. But shall I not see you, Lillie, or little brother, until I return?"

"You probably will. We shall call and see you, and perhaps you may come to call on us. Will that please you?"

"Dear, kind mamma, I am so happy; I will try to be a good girl. When shall we go?"

"To-morrow, my daughter," replied her mother, kissing her and bidding her good-night.

Anna kept awake till late that night, thinking of the expected pleasure of her visit. She could hardly wait until morning, but when the Doctor came for her, she grieved at the thought of leaving her home, and kissed all of them two or three times, then looked into her little bed-room which seemed dearer to her than ever before. During the ride, she could not keep back the tears, but with so many new things to be seen and heard at the Doctor's, she soon regained her cheerfulness.

The Doctor had many foreign curiosities, and while

he explained their nature and history, she listened with great interest. There were specimens of corals, shells, minerals, insects, and birds about which she had many questions to ask. Besides, his library was furnished with entertaining books. She had read her own little volumes until she knew them by heart, and when she found so many new ones she was so eager to read that she could hardly find time to play.

Lucy's first act on arriving at home, was to rush into the kitchen and tell Hannah what a fine young lady she had become since she went to Mrs. Howard's, and that she would n't blow out Hannah's candle any more, nor upset her work-box, because she would n't let her cut up her pinafore for her doll's dress.

"Don't you think I 'm a big girl, Hannah? I have learned a great deal. I can read 'most as good as Anna. I can sew, too, not make believe, but real nice."

Hannah, who had been in the Doctor's family ever since Lucy's birth, regarded her pet with pride, said,

"Yes, darling, you do know ever so much, and you have grown as handsome as a doll."

"I was May Queen, and Arthur was a little prince to wait upon me. He whispered in my ear saying I looked real beautiful. He sometimes plagues me, and I get mad with him. Papa says I must n't 'cause he took me out of the water when I was drowned."

Although Lucy vexed Hannah by her waywardness, yet she was never angry with her long at a

time, and it was fortunate that she had such affection for the motherless child. Like so many other children, Lucy ruled when she could, though she never attempted it with her father, she having an instinctive perception it would be useless. The longer she was at home, the improvement in mind and character became more apparent to her friends. The Doctor congratulated himself for placing her with the Howards, and resolved to have her remain with them as long as practicable.

Alice, as soon as she returned to the village, from which she had been absent a few weeks, resumed her benevolent labors. Her first thought was to visit the afflicted couple, Deacon Hayford and his wife, whom she found almost overcome with grief.

"Is there any one whose sorrow is like my sorrow," exclaimed the agonized mother, wiping the tears from her eyes.

"We were proud of this child," said the stricken father. "She was our Benjamin, and we denied her nothing from the time she was a babe in the cradle until her last days, when she would not heed our advice."

"O don't, father, reproach the dear child. It was our fault that we did not watch over her more faithfully."

"I believe she has gone to her rest where the deceiver will trouble her no more," said Alice, "and the babe she loved so tenderly is not separated from her."

"We could have surrendered our darling with more resignation had she died in her right mind, and at her own home, with her friends to close her eyes," said her mother with tears. Alice could only weep with the bereaved parents, as she felt her own youth and inexperience disqualified her from offering any other sympathy. Tears are sometimes better comforters than words.

Clive Layton was expected every day, and when the stage passed the Doctor's house it was closely watched to see whether he was on board, while Alice was seated at the window nervously watching its arrival. It usually arrived at the village early in the afternoon, but to-day it was delayed, when she began to feel anxious lest some serious accident had occurred. At length the coach was heard rumbling over the stony road, and soon came in sight, heavily loaded with passengers and baggage. Clive was on the outside and had taken his seat with his friend, so as to obtain a view of the country and be recognized by his friends who might be watching for him. When they passed the Doctor's, he removed his hat and waved his hand to Alice. His friend saw her return the salutation.

"By Jove, Layton, who was that angel you saluted?"

"Don't you recognize the original, Paul? You have seen her picture."

"That is n't your cousin Alice?"

"It is she or her shade."

"The greater fool you are, Clive."

"We shall see," was the reply.

The public house stood some rods from the Doctor's and it was near the hotel that the passengers with their baggage were landed. The driver raised himself in his seat, got his four horses in hand, cracked his whip, and drove up to the hotel in a graceful sweep, and pompous style. The piazza was filled with the villagers watching to see the stage come in and hear the news. Some were waiting for the mail, others were prompted by curiosity, but it was not long before the destination of each psssenger was known to the inquisitive.

Clive found some of his old friends who gave him cordial welcome and rallied him on the object of his visit which they supposed was his pretty cousin Alice. Many inquisitive glances were directed toward Crawford, as if they would like to know who he was and what was his errand.

"Driver, leave our baggage at Dr. Clive's," said Layton. The driver, a strong, large man, tossed the baggage on to the ground with as much ease as he would have swung a cat, mounted his seat and started almost as soon as the order was given. A stage driver in earlier times was a sovereign in his calling. He was quite conscious of his importance and power, while he performed no mean part in his little world, for he was the harbinger of news to thousands waiting patiently for his arrival. Did he not form a connecting link between separated friends?

Was not his existence essential to business as well as friendship and even the interests of the State?

"Come, Crawford, it is time you were introduced to my cousin. She is waiting for us."

"Well, lead me to Eden; I'm impatient to go."

Alice's heart beat violently since she saw the stage arrive, for she was expecting Clive and the stranger every moment, but the delay had given her time to control her emotions so that she appeared outwardly composed. Dressed in simple white, her golden locks bound with a blue ribbon, and a delicate blush on her cheek, Alice never looked more beautiful than when Clive entered. He greeted her in his usual cordial manner, and introduced his friend.

Crawford was a connoisseur in beauty, whether in works of art or nature, and his perceptions were almost faultless. He was especially susceptible to female beauty, though it was seldom he thought that he saw faultless features or figures. He was often bantered by his friends for his susceptibility to female charms, but he was not understood. He had the eye of an artist, and as such he worshipped at the shrine of beauty. Possessing attractive qualities himself, especially in the estimation of the fair sex, his friends thought it singular that he remained impervious to those charms he had so often praised. He said he was in no danger, and could admire a woman without falling in love.

When Paul was first introduced to Alice Bradford

her loveliness entranced him. He lost for an instant his self-possession, and for the first time since Layton knew him, his easy, careless manners became awkwardly embarrassed. Alice, naturally shrinking, was, on the contrary, composed and received him with a quiet dignity. Crawford soon, however, recovered himself and was perfectly at ease. The Doctor joined them and the conversation turned upon his guest's family affairs.

Paul Crawford's father was a wealthy manufacturer, and had been the Doctor's early friend. When the latter was struggling through college Mr. Crawford, then well established in business, assisted him by his influence, and privately by pecuniary help, so that the Doctor's independence might not be offended. Now that the Doctor had the means, he watched for an opportunity to return past favors, and felt happy for the occasion to offer the hospitalities of his home to the son of his friend. It was Crawford's intention to spend a short time with Dr. Clive, and then go to the lake and, perhaps, to the White Mountains. Layton, of course, could not be expected to leave Jefferson under present circumstances, therefore Crawford would pursue his journey alone. A week passed before Paul thought of his previous plan, and then merely alluded to the course he had proposed without manifesting any intention of resuming his travels.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SANG SONGS.

Sang songs, and told us what befalls
In classic Dartmouth's college halls,
Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends, rare and old."

PAUL CRAWFORD and Clive Layton had been firm friends ever after they began college life. They roomed together, and had been in each other's confidence, though in many respects they were unlike in appearance and character. Clive was tall with dark hair, and generally thoughtful and reserved except to his intimate friends, while Paul was less in stature, with blue eyes, bright, ruddy complexion, and hair inclined to curl, and of frank, easy manners which made him popular with all classes. Every one would have selected Layton as the more intellectual of the two, but Crawford would have been chosen first as a familiar friend. Layton's character was not easily read, but when understood, it seemed like tried gold. There was always something to be studied, something to be learned of his character, and one was never certain he had fathomed his nature, whereas Crawford was so ingenuous that a short acquaintance was sufficient to comprehend him, but he had one great defect,

that of not concentrating his versatile powers upon a single purpose, partly due to nature and partly to circumstances. Being an heir to wealth, the necessity of fitting himself for some useful career did not arouse his ambition, a quality in which he was deficient. In a few weeks he would graduate, yet he had not decided whether or not he would give his attention to art, for which he showed a decided inclination, but as for any other object of pursuit, or whether he would travel abroad for some time to come, he could not decide. His friends had repeatedly urged him to decide upon some definite pursuit, for his own benefit, to which he replied in a facetious manner: —

"I have not the qualities of a hero; I shall always be a careless, good-for-nothing fellow. I can never become a Burke or a Webster, a Galen or a Sydenham, a Bossuet or a Chalmers, a Dante or a Buonarotti, a Mozart or a Beethoven, and nothing less could satisfy my ambition."

"You have missed the mark this time," said Clive, laughing; suppose you enter my profession?"

"Ye gods, defend me! Should my soaring ambition tempt me so high, my fate would be more deplorable than that of Icarus."

"Your low opinion of the profession would unfit you for it," said Clive.

"I have no desire to have my happiness destroyed, and my reputation damaged, by any conceited parent who believed his son to be an Admirable Crichton,

while I might consider him a stupid blockhead," replied Paul.

Anna and Lucy had gone to walk with their dolls when Clive and his friend arrived, and when they returned an hour after they were delighted to find the expected guests had come. Lucy in her enthusiasm rushed into "Cousin Clive's" arms and gave him a cordial embrace, regardless of the presence of a stranger.

"I 'm so glad to see you. I 've lots to tell you about Mamma Howard, Lillie, Aunt Fanny, and Arthur. O Clive, I was drowned and came to life again."

"I should think you had 'come to life.' You seem pretty lively," said Clive, detaching her arms from his embrace, and gently placing her from him. "I see you have grown, Lucy. I presume you have learned a great deal. Here is Anna," who had stood quietly looking on. "Come here, Anna," extending his hand. She timidly stepped forward and took it. "Are n't you going to give me a kiss?" stooping down to receive it. The child blushed, hesitated, but kissed him, looking shyly at Crawford.

"Who is this young fawn?" said he. Anna and Lucy were both introduced to him, and it was not long before all three were on friendly and familiar terms.

After tea, Clive took the Doctor's team and drove to the Howards'. It was a beautiful summer day, and the town looked so different from what it did when it

was buried beneath a snow-bank that he could hardly believe it was the same. Vegetation was so fresh and green; the trees, whose bare limbs were seen all through the winter, were now covered with fresh leaves; the fields were fragrant with clover blossoms, and little patches of flowers were looking gay and attractive. His own feelings were in harmony with nature. An absence of a few months had strengthened his attachment to nature's wonderful scenes, and especially the object of his affection.

At length the well-remembered Cottage came in sight, nestling in shrubbery and standing on the borders of the forest. It was unpretending, but to him more beautiful than marble palaces, since it sheltered one dearer to him than all the world besides. Mrs. Howard saw him approaching and went to the door to receive him, and, after greeting her, his first inquiry was: —

"Where is Fanny?"

"In the arbor at the Pine Grove. Shall I call her?"

"No, I prefer to seek her there. Which is the way?"

"Follow this path and it will lead you directly to it."

Meeting the object of his search he said: —

"I was revolving in my mind what a devoted little wife I should have, when I saw you at work on your sketch so diligently, solely to please me."

"Oh, Clive, you give me too much credit for disin-

terestedness, for have you not become necessary to my happiness? Besides, I work for the love of it, though I did not at first."

"What changed your feelings?" said Clive, drawing nearer, and winding a curl of her hair around his finger.

"What a querist you are, and why do you ask, when you know the truth perfectly?"

The sun was low in the west when they turned to see it disappear below the horizon, and its departing rays fell on Fanny's brow and hair as on the evening of her betrothal.

"Have you forgotten that memorable evening," said Clive in a low, gentle voice, "and the vow we made?"

"I could never forget it," was the reply.

With hands clasped, they bowed their heads and offered a silent prayer for the Divine blessing on their future lives. A love thus sanctified could not fail to bring domestic happiness. The friends sat for an hour, conversing about their future duties, until it occurred to them they ought to return to the Cottage.

"I have a surprise for you, Clive," said Mrs. Howard, "and I hope it may be agreeable. My oldest brother is a lawyer, settled in a town a few miles from Hanover, who is a graduate of Dartmouth, and generally attends its commencements. You are aware there is an old and flourishing academy in the town, but you may not know that it is in need of a princi-

pal. My brother, whose name is Thomas, is one of the trustees, and the duty mainly belongs to him of selecting a teacher for the position. A few days ago I received a letter from him, inviting you and Fanny to spend some time in Clermont and attend commencement with him, and by this means he could have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with you, and should you be mutually pleased it may result in your appointment as principal."

"I thank you very much for your kind interest in my welfare," said Clive. "I hope I may deserve your kindness. 'Squire Sherwood is known at the college, as he is one of its trustees. I should feel highly honored to make his acquaintance, but I have some misgivings about answering his expectations."

"I think he is favorably impressed, from what he has heard of you, and you have a powerful advocate in Fanny, of whom my brother was always fond."

Clive looked at her with an affectionate and admiring smile which brought a blush to her cheeks, while he thought she was becoming more lovely, both in person and character, every day. As the evening was advancing, Clive felt compelled to return to the Doctor's, telling Fanny he would bring his friend Crawford to call upon her to-morrow.

"I am afraid I shall not please him, he is so fastidious, according to your opinion."

"I think you have misunderstood me in what I said of him," said Clive.

"Will you let me know if I please him?"

"Yes."

Clive reluctantly turned his horse towards the village, but he had received a fresh impulse for the battle of life, and he felt a stronger determination to win the struggle. The young heart he had won would be his Mentor, hence all his plans and aims had reference to her, while he felt honored by the love of such a woman. Thus he reasoned; but perhaps his affections had controlled entirely his judgment, though *he* was satisfied.

What were Fanny's thoughts in the meantime?

Fair visions of future happiness, unclouded by sorrow or disappointment were ever present to her imagination. She never understood the sterner realities of life, and her chief anxiety was to promote the happiness of her affianced. She would prepare herself for all domestic cares and for his companionship, and would cultivate her mind and manners to please him. As he had no fortune to aid him, she would practise economy to relieve him from pecuniary embarrassment, therefore she was constantly asking her sister how to perform household duties. Mrs. Howard smiled at Fanny's zeal and perseverance, but advised and encouraged her. She did not check the ardor of her hopeful nature by suggesting the idea of future sorrows lurking in ambush, believing she would have strength given her to meet them when they came.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A TALE OFTEN TOLD.

"Her beauty seemed not of a mortal birth."

PAUL CRAWFORD was at first attracted by the beauty of Alice, as an admirer of art might have been attracted by a beautiful picture, but the more he studied her features, the more fascinated he became.

Clive had noticed in his cousin varying moods quite unusual. Sometimes she seemed pensive, at other times she appeared to be in an unusually happy state of mind. At times he observed a moisture in her eyes and a slight trembling in her hand, attributed to the delicate state of her health, and would say to her, "Alice, you are not well; you must rest."

"Do not feel anxious about me, Clive, I shall soon recover my former vigor. Employment is a benefit; it affords me pleasure. I flatter myself that I am getting over my idle habits, and am trying to make myself useful in an humble way."

"You always were useful, my sister, as no one knows better than the playmate of your childhood."

"The endearing name of sister; how it wounds, when it was intended to soothe; I would rather he should call me Alice, or cousin, or even Miss Bradford. Sister implies a relation which precludes the

possibility he could ever cherish a tenderer emotion. It would be some consolation to know he ever regarded me with affection, though he may have given it to another. May he never know, during my life, how tenderly I regarded him from early childhood."

Layton took his friend as he promised, to call upon the Howards. No words had been exchanged between them in regard to Alice, but Clive was pretty sure Paul was interested in her though he was not certain she felt any special regard for him only as the personal friend of himself. The conversation during the ride naturally centred upon her, but when she was mentioned, Paul's manner changed. He did not discuss her beauty as an abstract idea as he had been accustomed to do, but referred to it in a reverential manner, as if it were something too sacred to be made the subject of criticism. Crawford was never rude in his manners, — that was in opposition to his nature and education, but he never before felt any other emotion when meeting a beautiful woman than that of an artist. He did not indulge in raillery so natural to him, when he laughingly joked Layton for his devotion to Fanny.

On the introduction of Paul, Layton thought Fanny was all he could wish. She wore no ornaments except a rosebud in her hair and one on her bosom. Her eyes were full of tenderness; her countenance, though not faultless, was constantly changing its expression, indicating her different emotions. Sometimes her

eyes were cast down, shaded by their long lashes, then, sparkling with vivacity, they were raised to the speaker's face. At first, she seemed timid, but Crawford's frank manners soon dissipated all lingering fear she cherished of his criticism, when she resumed her artless ways.

"Fanny," said Clive, "will you show your portfolio of drawings to Crawford?"

"O, Clive, I am sorry you mentioned them before Mr. Crawford who you said was a connoisseur in art, and I have nothing but the crudest sketches, such as school-girls make."

"Miss Sherwood, my friend Clive gives me too much honor. I know but little of art, but have my own private opinions. I should be exceedingly happy to examine your sketches."

Fanny hesitated, but she saw that Clive wished it, therefore she produced several specimens of crayon drawings and water colors, some having been executed while at school, and others after she became acquainted with Clive. Crawford selected half a dozen specimens which he considered very good, and expressed the hope that Miss Sherwood would prosecute her studies in this department. When he found the one she had just completed, he pronounced it decidedly good. It was a landscape view from the arbor, which afforded a fine prospect for an artist.

"Let us repair to the grove," said Clive, "and see the original."

Accordingly they all went to the spot, when Paul said, "This is a charming view; I did not expect to find such scenery here."

He then made some valuable suggestions to Fanny, which she might use to advantage in another sketch, and commended her taste and skill where she excelled. All this was done so naturally and kindly, that she was neither mortified nor discouraged.

Until the moment of leaving, Clive forgot Alice's invitation for Fanny to spend the next day at the Doctor's and would probably never have recalled it had he not been sent to bring her.

After leaving Glen Cottage, Crawford said, "What a fortunate man you are, Layton."

"I was sure you would like her," said Clive.

"Don't you feel jealous of me," said Paul, "such a handsome fellow as I am?"

"Not in the least. My little Fanny is proof against all fascinations, except from one source."

"How conceited you are," replied Paul. "That's the way we men talk, as though we were sure of taking captive every woman we see, though, to be honest, we ought to confess that we feel a distrust lest — well, I may as well confess it — we meet with a repulse, greatly to our mortification."

"I passed through that ordeal," said Layton, "some months ago when I wrote you that my fate depended upon 'yes' or 'no.'"

"How did you manage to win the admiration of

such ladies as Alice and Fanny? The former, your cousin, as you call her, is devoted to you, as every one can see, while the latter proclaims by her manners that she has surrendered unconditionally."

"You don't imagine that Alice regards me other than as a friend and brother, do you?" said Clive.

"Humph! well, perhaps not, for the depths of a woman's heart I would not attempt to fathom," answered Paul.

"I tell you that you are mistaken in your suspicions of Alice"

Paul made no other reply than "Ah," and began to whistle a familiar air, but his thoughts were very busy about the subject of their conversation.

Layton spent most of his time at Glen Cottage, while devolved upon Alice the duty of entertaining Paul as the guest of her uncle. The time he decided upon to resume his journey to the lake had passed, yet he felt no inclination to go, while the Doctor invited him to remain through his vacation and make his contemplated journey some other time. Though at first he declined to accept the proposal, nevertheless he lingered and gave much of his time to Alice, and, before he was aware, his admiration ended in a devoted attachment. Her beauty at first attracted him, but her gentleness and innocence won his heart.

Alice did not allow the presence of guests to interfere with her duties to her "patients," as the Doctor called them, her "parishioners," as Mr. Goodell said,

and her "beneficiaries," as Paul Crawford styled them, but her "angels of mercy," as she called those to whose comfort she administered, for she insisted they were conferring favors upon her. After Paul had been at the Doctor's some time he proposed to accompany Alice in her daily visits, for during her absence, he found life intolerable, as he expressed it; and rather than suffer from *ennui*, he would prefer the penalty of seeing the old, ugly, maimed, sick, and dying, and listen to a long catalogue of grievances.

"Alice," said he, with characteristic nonchalance, "can I be of any use to you in your labors? I can gather your flowers and carry your basket, and perhaps you can transform me into a 'messenger of mercy.'" These were prophetic words, carelessly spoken.

"I can find more useful employment for your idle fingers than tangling my spools, and disarranging my work basket, generally," said Alice, laughingly.

"Good; now, let me go to work," seizing a pair of scissors to cut some flowers with.

"Your zeal is greater than your knowledge, which is generally true of neophytes," said Alice, taking away the scissors and going to the closet for the garden shears. "I think these will answer better."

Armed with such an instrument, Paul proceeded to cut and arrange several bouquets with his usual taste. Alice took the basket used for the purpose, and nearly filled it with substantial articles for the poor, and delicacies for the sick, on the top of which she

placed the flowers. Crawford took the basket, and they began their calls.

"Perhaps, Lady Confessor, you prefer to leave your novice outside, while you hear the confession of your penitents within," said Paul.

"Oh, no ; you must not escape the disagreeable part of your duty, as you view it."

The first call was made upon Aunt Hetty, an aged woman whose palsied hands and dim sight indicated great age. There was no trace of beauty in her wrinkled countenance.

"How are you to-day, Aunty?" inquired Alice.

"Weak in body, my dear, but strong in faith."

"How did you rest last night?"

"Well, I slept nearly two hours. The pain in my poor old limbs kept me awake."

"Did you feel lonesome, Aunty?"

"Oh, no, dear ; the blessed Saviour was with me. I was so happy thinking of Him."

"You like flowers, Aunt Hetty?"

"Oh, yes ; I can smell them, but my poor old eyes are so dim I can't see how pretty they look, but when I get home to glory, I shall have my sight again."

"I have brought a friend to see you."

Crawford had stood behind Alice, and Aunt Hetty was not conscious of his presence.

"Who is it, darling?"

Alice then introduced him as the friend and guest of Dr. Clive, when he came and took her hand.

"You are a young man, I know by your hand. It was kind to come and see an old woman like me."

He told her the credit belonged to Alice, but he was happy to see one who had lived so long.

"God bless you, you mean to do good in the world."

Paul said he hoped he might, though he did not do as much as he ought.

Alice then left some little delicacies for the invalid, and went to other patients. One who had suffered much was querulous, and it required some time for Alice to soothe her perturbed spirits, and impart consolation. To some she read, while with others she listened to their complaints. Her last call was made at Deacon Hayford's. The old couple did not need pecuniary aid, but her presence with her unostentatious sympathy was comforting to them. She tried to supply the place of a daughter as nearly as she could. The history of their trials enlisted the sympathy of Paul.

Among her "beneficiaries" were those who were poor and in need of help, and Crawford, who was very generous, placed in her hand sums of money, with strict injunctions to secrecy, to be expended upon these people. Paul Crawford did not claim to be religious, but he was not a scoffer. He never sneered when the subject of religion was mentioned, neither was he wholly indifferent to its personal claims. The early, faithful instructions of a pious

mother had never been forgotten, but they still left their impression on his mind.

When Paul saw the active piety of Alice, the patience and faith of Aunt Hetty, the meek submission of Deacon Hayford, he felt they had a divine support he did not possess. It led him to a thorough examination of himself, his motives, and responsibilities, and the longer he meditated, the more dissatisfied he felt with himself, and the more earnest his desire to renounce his useless career and pursue some honorable course of labor. Alice's pure and exalted character inspired him with a reverence hardly akin to an earthly passion.

CHAPTER XXV.

POLITICAL ECONOMY.

"In God's own might
He girds us for the coming fight."

When Clive Layton returned to Jefferson he was received with a cordial welcome by his old acquaintances and pupils, and had many invitations to visit them at their homes. Many of these he accepted, and called upon nearly every family, accompanied by his friend Paul Crawford, to show him, as he said, how a school-master was regarded. These were times when his profession was respected and his labors appreciated. They called at 'Squire Baldwin's near evening, therefore were urged to remain to tea.

Crawford's agreeable manners won the confidence of the young people, while at the same time he pleased all the others, so that the Misses Baldwin were quite charmed with him, and Paul enjoyed the jokes and laughter of the 'Squire as well.

"We must take another day for the Waltons," said Clive, "for I wish you to know what sensible people they are." They did not omit the Pages in their new home on Walnut Hill. Within a few days, an invitation was sent by the Waltons for the Doctor

and his family, Mr. Goodell the minister, and his wife, the Howards, and some of the other neighbors, to a small party at their house, when Aunt Jenny, as usual, entertained the guests in her genial way; but none of the company so highly amused Crawford, who had a keen sense of humor, as "Marvellous" Chapin and his wife Prudy. Mr. Chapin had heard so much of the wonders of the railroad that he was curious to see it in "full operation," using his own words. Whether he supposed the railroad was a movable machine going through the country with great speed, or that it was an immense express wagon driven by steam, was not evident, for he spoke of it as travelling at a certain speed, and carrying passengers and freight. He and his wife made a long journey, as railroads were not known at Jefferson, for the purpose of seeing the "wonderful thing," as he said, and for a long time he did not recover from his astonishment, and would relate his adventures to every listener he could gain.

"Have you ever travelled with the railroad, Mr. Crawford? Marvellous, entirely!"

"I have had a little experience. Do you like that mode of travelling, Mr. Chapin?"

"Why, no; I've never rid in it. Prudy and I went a great distance to see it. Marvellous! before we come in sight we heard an awful snorting and puffing and racketing, as if fifty wild colts had broke loose. Says I to Prudy, 'What's that? the railroad has started,

sure.' And pooty soon we saw the ingin', as they call it. Marvellous, 'tirely! it did look worse than an Injin. Do you think, the old mare pricked up her ears, whisked round and, in spite of me, turned us out. We rolled down a sand-bank, and mother's best bunnet was spoiled; but we was fort'nate that it did n't break our necks. The old mare, confound her, did n't stop till she left us miles behind."

Crawford laughed heartily, and then related some of his experiences by that mode of travel, at which Mr. Chapin had an opportunity of using his favorite expletives, while Prudy opened her eyes very wide with a "Now du tell," and "Did you ever?" as often as her deliberate manner allowed.

"Do you not hope to see railroads crossing your State in all directions, Mr. Chapin?" inquired Layton.

"Why, no; guess not. Could n't keep a critter on my farm."

"It would be impossible, our State is so mountainous," said Mr. Cutler.

"Rev. Samuel Parker, in his journey overland, gave it as his opinion that there were no insuperable obstacles to a railway across the Rocky Mountains," observed Mr. Layton.

"And a little later, Lewis Gaylord Clark said the person is now living who will make a railway trip across the continent," observed Mr. Goodell.

"Marvellous, 'tirely!" responded Mr. Chapin.

Mrs. Walton had two webs of linen cloth of her

own manufacture spread on the grass to bleach; one for sheets, the other, of what was called bird's-eye, for table-linen and towels. They had become as white as snow, and attracted the attention of the ladies. Mrs Goodell, to whom the process of making and bleaching cloth was a novelty, was much interested in listening to Aunt Jenny's description of the method. At length the attention of the gentlemen was awakened.

"Mr. Walton," said Mr. Goodell, "I see that you continue the ancestral practice of home manufacture."

"I do, and wish there were more to follow my example."

"Do you prefer home manufactures to factory goods?" inquired Crawford.

"Decidedly, for several reasons."

"Will you give us some of your reasons, Mr. Walton?" asked Layton.

"In the first place, cloth made of flax is more durable and is more handsome. What is more beautiful as cloth than smooth linen, white as snow?"

"Cotton goods can be made more quickly and cheaper than linen," replied Lawton.

"That may be, but give me the homespun fabrics."

"Then you do not consider Whitney, Hargreaves, Arkwright, and Crompton entitled to much credit for their inventions," said Crawford.

"No, not if they require the blood, sweat, and tears of the slave," replied Mr. Walton, who was in-

trenching on dangerous ground; but he was a firm abolitionist, which, at that time, required great moral courage.

Crawford blushed, for his father was a wealthy manufacturer, who believed slavery was a forbidden topic of discussion.

"You certainly do not suppose operatives in cotton mills are oppressed, do you?" inquired Paul.

"No, that was not my meaning. I referred to the cotton producer, that is, the slave."

"You will admit that the cultivation of cotton has been of great advantage to the country, financially?" observed Mr. Goodell.

"I admit that in a qualified sense; but slavery would not have extended and gained control of the government, as it has done, had it not been for the manufacture of cotton goods. Believing, as I do, that slavery is a personal and national sin, and that the Supreme Ruler is just, I think there is for us, as a nation, a fearful punishment unless we put away the evil."

"I believe also that slavery is a great wrong, but I do not see how we can interfere with it without endangering the Union," replied Mr. Goodell. "I wish with all my heart that we were rid of it, but I do not see how it can be done. Perhaps God, in His Providence, may bring it about in some mysterious way."

"It will be by fire and sword, unless we do it volun-

tarily," replied Mr. Walton, and turning to Dr. Clive said, "What's your opinion, Doctor?"

"Well," said the Doctor, deliberately placing his right foot over his left knee, and then running his fingers through his hair, as he was accustomed to do whenever he had a difficult case to decide, "I am a novice, perhaps; I ought not to express my opinion."

"O, yes, Doctor, do," came from several voices.

"When I was a young man I went South to increase my limited means by teaching, as so many Yankee students do. I became interested in my employer's daughter, and, as you know, took her as a bride to New England. I thought then, like other silly young men," here he cast a furtive glance at Layton and Crawford, "that I must like everything my sweetheart approved, therefore I pretended to be in favor of the patriarchal institution. I saw it in Maryland in its mildest form, and love for my wife led me for a time to forget my New England birth and education. But since then I have seen more of its real nature when travelling in the South, and am convinced of its dangerous tendencies. The system is fearful."

Mrs. Howard, Alice, and Fanny expressed by their looks their approbation of the Doctor's views, while Mrs. Goodell believed the negroes were fitted only for a state of servitude, that their condition was far better than when in their native country, and she did not see why slavery was a sin or a danger.

Crawford evidently coincided with her views, but

seeing a look of pain on the face of Alice, he did not express his opinion. Layton, who was always guarded in expressing his views, adopted Mr. Walton's opinions, but took no part in the discussion.

Mrs. Howard, with the tact natural to her, invited the ladies to go into the garden, and see Mrs. Walton's flowers, with the view of interrupting the conversation, which might be continued, causing some unpleasant feelings.

The gentlemen naturally glided into politics, but the subject was not sufficiently fascinating to the younger guests to prevent them from joining the ladies in the garden.

The rose bushes were in full bloom. Crawford cut a spray of the buds, trimmed off the thorns, and placed it in Alice's hair. "I crown you the Peerless. A fitting diadem for the Queen of Beauty," said he in a low voice.

"You admire in me what I claim no credit for," said Alice; "had I a darker complexion, I might have been adorned with a diadem made of cotton."

Paul felt keenly the rebuke, though he had not expressed his opinions on the subject of the recent conversation, still he understood that Alice read his thoughts.

"Pardon me, Alice, if I differ from you in opinion. My education has been different from yours; but if I am wrong I trust your more enlightened conscience will teach me the truth."

"I should shrink from the idea of teaching *you* anything. It is my feelings that are opposed to slavery," replied Alice.

Crawford walked thoughtfully by her side, pulling the petals from a rose and scattering them along the path. Fanny had fastened a rose in Clive's button-hole, and was looking into his face with tenderness while he was expressing his opinion upon the subject, and assented to all his views, as she was accustomed to do. This habit made him more cautious in declaring his opinions, for he felt as a tender parent feels when the child accepts every word as if it were a pure drop from the fountain of truth, and he hesitated as he thought her confidence in him might be weakened when she understood his faults. He had won her heart, and how could he preserve her confiding love? One thing he would never do, that is, intentionally deceive her. Honesty, he argued, between lovers, even in thought, is the foundation of confidence. Conscious of his own faults, he would not expect perfection in her.

Tea-time was at length announced, and the company gathered around Mrs. Walton's table, where was placed every delicacy her skill could prepare, and she was a model cook for those times, when tastes and domestic customs were more simple than at the present day. The company did full justice to her preparations, and parted in good fellowship.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GOSSIP.

"What tidings, Gossip, peace or weird?
What tidings heard you there, I pray?"

SEVERAL excursions to places of interest in the town and down the river were planned and made by the young friends, in which they were joined by some of the village youth, including Ambrose Merill, the merchant's son and one of Fanny's admirers, and Henry Owen, who was partial to Alice Bradford. These gay young men considered themselves a match for the Dartmouth students, and the rivalry between these parties to win the admiration of the young ladies enlivened these excursions. Fanny's musical talent made her society much sought on such occasions.

The arrival of Layton sent Polly McClure on a new conjecture. She saw that Fanny, and not Alice, was his choice, since he was so frequent a visitor to the Cottage; therefore a new scheme was planned, that was to have Paul Crawford the suitor of Alice, while the village gossips found another topic to discuss and settle, which was the new wife of Dr. Clive, who was expected soon at Jefferson. The Doctor had been so reticent about the matter, and so skilful in concealing his matrimonial plans, that no one sus-

pected his intentions until nearly on the eve of their accomplishment. Various were the opinions in regard to the Doctor's intended wife, some favorable, others adverse. Some of the gossips wondered he did not choose a younger bride — none had seen her ; others thought he should have selected an older companion. Some wondered whether she was rich, others whether she was proud, while nearly all claimed that she would be an unkind step mother, and that poor little Lucy would be a martyr to her tyranny.

Many of these views reached the Doctor, but he understood the world and human nature too well to notice them, except to smile at their absurdity. There were those who never quite forgave the Doctor for bringing to the village a new Mrs. Clive in such a clandestine manner, and decided not to like her, nor wish to form her acquaintance. These persons were never on familiar terms with the Doctor's family, therefore he would not suffer much by the loss of their friendship.

Little Johnny McClure, Layton's champion, had been in the habit of going to Glen Cottage quite often, sometimes to do an errand for his mother, whose habit of borrowing became a passion, and sometimes he went on his own account, for he "liked the folks down there, as they treated him like a gentleman.'

Mrs. Howard had noticed that he was bright and well-behaved for a boy with his surroundings, and

with her usual tact and benevolence she tried to develop his good qualities, and soon discovered he was particularly susceptible to kindness, perhaps because of its absence in his own home. Johnny was often present when Mrs. Howard was instructing her pupils, and their lessons were treasured in his memory. His curiosity was stimulated and he eagerly read all the little books belonging to the children, and then asked for more. He thought Miss Fanny the "most pleasant lady in the world," for she often sang to him and told him stories. The boy seemed to think the Cottage a paradise.

One day, just before Layton arrived, he came there on an errand, but lingered, as if something was in his mind which he wished to make known.

"What is it, Johnny?" inquired Fanny.

"Do you know the master, Miss Fanny?"

"Is it Mr. Layton you mean?"

"Yes, marm. Is n't he first rate?"

"Do you think so?"

"Jimmy, I guess I does."

Fanny could not refrain from laughing at the boy's way of expressing himself. She said:—

"Johnny, I will tell you something you would like to hear, if you will not say 'Jimmy' any more. Mr. Layton is coming to make us a visit soon."

"I'll never say Jim — again," but remembering he had a brother by that name, he said, "I'll never swear it again."

"You must come and see Mr. Layton when he arrives."

"Yes, marm, I will."

Johnny went home to tell the news, and the next day it was circulated throughout the village, though the general news dealer jumbled together conflicting statements and expressed opinions entirely opposed to the truth.

Clive had not been long in town before his little friend called to see him. Johnny stood in such awe of his teacher that he said but little in reply to his inquiries, and only in Clive's absence did he become eloquent in his praise.

"Your pupil," said Fanny archly, "stands in such fear of his teacher, that you ought to conclude he dislikes you, as you did of an older pupil once, and was much troubled about it."

"I am conceited enough to believe Johnny has a strong attachment for me under that reserve, from the fact that such things have happened before."

"O, Mr. Pedagogue, I don't fear you now," said Fanny, taking a seat on a stool near, and placing a soft little hand in his, "though you know so much, and I am so ignorant."

"I prefer to see you at my side, my equal in privileges, as you are my superior in attractions and goodness. My gentle Birdie, when you speak of my superior wisdom you make me feel very humble."

"Now, if you are not very wise, I cannot marry

you, for I need some one to tell me everything, to save me the trouble of learning."

"That is, you wish me to be a Solomon."

"Precisely."

"In everything?"

"Well, not in —"

"I will supply the ellipsis. Not in a divided heart," said Clive.

"No, I should not like to have you love any other woman."

"You believe that love is better than wisdom."

"Love with wisdom is best," said Fanny.

"True, I could respect you even were you ignorant, but I could not love you."

"Then you did not love me because you fancied me beautiful," said Fanny, pretending to be offended.

"No, Fanny, though you are beautiful to me, it was your moral and intellectual qualities, united with your graceful manners, that won my heart. I do not undervalue physical beauty; it is only that I esteem it less highly than moral and intellectual qualities. When the former fades the latter grow brighter until they culminate in a heavenly radiance. There is your sister Paulina, who is by no means deficient in comeliness, but her chief attractions are her sweet, noble character, and her intellectual powers. But for her I never should have known and loved my little Fanny," said Clive, taking her hand.

"Few persons have so good, kind, and wise a sister

as I have, and should I prove to be a useful woman I shall owe it to her and to you."

Mrs. Howard came into the room just as the last words were spoken.

"We were saying how much we were indebted to you for our happiness," said Clive.

"I am truly thankful for being the means of happiness to any one," Mrs. Howard replied, "but yours has a higher source, even your Heavenly Father, the Author of all noble and pure happiness."

CHAPTER XXVII.

A DECLARATION.

"In a little moment of time,
The bright hopes of a life all paled;
A brave man knew he had dared the leap,
And a proud man knew he had failed."

It was decided that Layton should accompany Fanny on her visit to her brother, when he returned to college, while Alice would remain with Mrs. Howard during her absence.

Clive desired to know how Alice regarded Crawford's attentions, and hoped she would receive them favorably. He had a high regard for both, and wished to see them happy, but he did not like to mention the subject to either, as Paul had not proposed, therefore he questioned Fanny about it.

"Paul is evidently much interested in Alice," said he. "Do you think she loves him? Woman is the best interpreter of a woman's heart, and as you are intimate with her, you can tell better than I."

"She respects him very much, and finds him an agreeable companion, but I think she loves him no more than she loves any one else," replied Fanny.

"Do you think if he should make her an offer, that she would accept it?"

"Perhaps so, but —"

"But what, Birdie?" as she raised her eyes doubtfully to his.

"It seems to me that Alice has an exalted respect for everyone, but that the idea of accepting any man as a lover is foreign to her feelings. She is so comprehensive and unselfish in her love, that I am ashamed of my own selfishness and narrowness."

"Then you think your love is selfish?" quickly answered Clive.

"May I be forgiven, if it is!" said Fanny, the tears trembling in her lashes, "for I can no more help it than I can for being what I am."

"Your love, in its depth and purity, is a heaven-bestowed gift, only it is concentrated, while that of Alice is diffused," said Clive, wiping away her tears. "I have observed in Alice," he resumed, "a moral and intellectual change, which, perhaps, is only a larger development of her nature. Evidently she feels that she has some higher and nobler purpose to fulfil. Her devotion to what she considers duty gives a color of sadness to her life."

"There is a struggle going on in her mind," said Fanny. "I have often observed traces of tears on her face, and then she would brighten with a look of triumph, as if she had conquered. I have urged her with affectionate caresses to let me share her sorrow, but she would tenderly and submissively reply, 'Dear Fanny, our Heavenly Father has laid secret burdens upon every heart, but He will help us to bear

them.' I do not like to urge her further to reveal the cause of her sorrow."

Clive was thoughtful, but at length said he believed Alice would be happier for the devoted love of Crawford.

Vacation was drawing to a close, yet Paul had made no formal offer to Alice, not from doubt in regard to his own feelings, but through distrust of himself, and uncertainty as to how she would receive it. The evening before leaving Jefferson, he and Alice were walking together. They had been talking of responsibilities in general and of their own in particular. Alice urged upon Paul the duty of devoting his talents to some noble pursuit. She urged it as a duty to his parents and to society, to his country, to himself, and to God. Her manner and words were earnest and eloquent.

"My dear Alice, — excuse the familiar address, — I confess having lived a useless, aimless life, and acknowledge the force of your arguments; but now I sincerely wish to reform. Will you assist me to do so?"

"My influence," replied Alice, "is of little account. It cannot extend beyond the very small circle of beloved friends. You have my sincere wishes for your welfare."

"You undervalue your influence, Alice, unless you include me in your list of endeared friends, for ever since I came within your presence and have seen the

purity, gentleness, and nobility of your life, I have felt aspirations higher and nobler than ever before, — desires you awakened. You have been the guiding star of my destiny. Will you not become the companion of my life also?"

Alice was not agitated nor surprised. She was thoughtful and for some time silent. At length she replied: —

"I thank you sincerely, Paul, for the honor shown one so humble, the highest honor a man can give a woman, and if my answer gives you pain, I deeply regret it. For you, personally, I feel nothing but the highest esteem, and, judging from what I have seen and heard, you possess qualities adapted to make any woman happy who is so fortunate as to possess your love; but I will not disguise from you the truth. I do not feel that devoted attachment which a woman ought to cherish for the one to whom she gives her hand. I think it would be impossible for me thus to love any one."

"You do not, at least, regard me with aversion," said Paul.

"Far from it. I consider you a valuable friend, and hope you will regard me as such."

"May I request that your decision be not final, and should a change in your feelings occur, will you think favorably of my offer?"

"I do not wish to encourage false hopes, but should a change happen, I — "

"Then you will be mine," taking her hand and pressing it to his lips.

It was a trying moment to Alice. She did not wish to encourage him, nor grieve him. She gently withdrew her hand.

"Will you promise me, Alice, that you will not give your affections to another, at least before considering well my earnest request?"

"I promise you, Paul, with the understanding that we remain friends."

"And that we correspond as attached — cruel fate that I cannot use another word — friends."

"I assent to that," said Alice.

Crawford offered his arm to Alice, and they walked home silent and thoughtful. She was troubled, for she understood she had given pain to one who loved and honored her above all others. She highly valued his character, but how could she be false to him and to herself? She feared that unintentionally she had encouraged his hopes, but the duty of entertaining him as a guest had especially devolved upon her, and how could she avoid him?

Paul Crawford felt keenly the refusal of Alice to receive him as a lover, but he hoped in time to win her heart. His wounded self-love was soothed by the kind manner in which his offer had been received, and the acknowledgment from Alice that she prized his friendship. That word friendship seemed such a mockery; he would eliminate it from the language.

Sometimes, in the intensity of his emotions, he almost wished she would hate him, for then he could sooner forget her.

The next day Paul was to leave the Doctor's and return to college, but when the time came for him to go, Alice was absent. He anxiously waited for her, until the stage drove up to the public house, when, at the last moment, she appeared with her hands full of flowers.

"Alice, will you give me one of those flowers?" said Crawford. She selected one of the choicest roses and gave it to him. He then took her hand, saying, "You have given me both pleasure and pain, the latter unintentionally, but I shall ever cherish a tender remembrance of you and the fond hopes you have awakened." This was said in a low tone that no one else could hear.

"Adieu my — friend."

"May heaven bless you, Paul," was her reply.

In another moment he was gone, but he felt that his future happiness depended upon her decision.

The rose he cherished with loving care, regarding it as the emblem of the giver, and when all its petals had faded and withered, he still kept it as a sacred memento of the one dear to him.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

LIFE AT THE COTTAGE.

"In the pure loves of child and mother,
Two human loves make one divine."

FANNY had completed her preparations for her journey, and a few days after Crawford left, accompanied by Clive, she parted from her friends at the Cottage, to be absent until autumn. The children all bade her good-bye, and embraced her with kisses repeated many times, until she forcibly separated from them, and Clive promised to bring her back before long. After he had graduated and settled upon his future course, they would visit Fanny's mother, Mrs. Sherwood.

Fanny had not seen her oldest brother since she left school, more than a year before; now she was to return to the place where she had spent some of the happiest days of her youth as a pupil in Clermont Academy. Her brother, in whose family she had passed her school years, was so much older than she, that he seemed a father to her. He was reserved and somewhat stern in manners, exacting in the observance of the rules of the family; so that the affectionate, vivacious little Fanny, when she first

became an inmate of his household, passed many unhappy hours in consequence of the restraint placed upon the freedom of her actions. She must love somebody with all the ardor of her soul, and she longed to express her feelings by caresses and endearing names; but her brother's manner was so cold and dignified that the ardor of her affection was repressed. She felt more freedom with her sister-in-law, but the difference in their ages and temperaments prevented a perfect bond of sympathy between them. She, however, found a congenial friend in Mrs. Sherwood's sister, Kate Hastings, a young girl about her own age.

There was no railway connecting Jefferson with Clermont, therefore the journey must be performed by stage, which now would be considered slow and tedious. The distance, which could have been passed by rail in a few hours, required the greater part of the day. Clive accompanied Fanny to a place within a few miles of her friend's home, where she was met by her brother's carriage, while Layton went to his own home some miles distant. Mr. Sherwood expressed much surprise at seeing his sister, and could hardly believe she was the same little merry, thoughtless child she seemed when she left school. She had gained in stature, while her intellectual powers had also been developed, though she preserved her simple manners, always childlike. Her brother was proud of her, for he had never supposed she possessed the

strength of character and mind she exhibited when he understood her better.

Alice, after spending a week with her new aunt, the wife of Dr. Clive, returned to Glen Cottage, and assumed Fanny's position in teaching the children. Mrs. Howard had watched over her young sister with a mother's affection, giving her instruction and counsel in whatever she believed would prepare her for usefulness and life's duties, always offering her sympathy in her joys and sorrows, encouraging her in every effort to improve, and excusing her failures when she made an effort to succeed.

Fanny was aware of this, and often expressed her gratitude and affection.

"What a dear, kind sister you are, Paulina; you are so indulgent, yet you do not spoil me. How can I repay your love and patience?"

"I shall be more than repaid, if you are a good and useful woman, trying to make others happy."

"I don't love Tousin Clive," said Lillie, adopting Lucy's manner of address, "'tause he carried off my Aunty."

"He will bring her back again," replied Anna.

"No, he won't, 'tause he's naughty."

"Aunt Fanny will be sorry, if you don't like him, Lillie."

"Does she love him?" inquired Lucy.

"Of course she does," said Anna. "Should n't you love your husband, Lucy?"

"Why, yes, I suppose so; but is Cousin Clive Aunt Fanny's husband?"

"Not yet, but he intends to be sometime."

No one ever told her so, but she inferred it from her own observation.

"Little eyes and ears are attentive," said Alice to Mrs. Howard.

"Yes; and it is important that we should be on our guard before them. Children are keen observers and always drawing their own conclusions, sometimes wrong, but as often right or nearly so."

Alice found in Mrs. Howard a true and devoted friend, who supplied the place of her own mother as nearly as a stranger could. Her quick and deep sympathy was grateful to Alice. Mrs. Howard had suspected she had some secret sorrow she was trying to conceal, but she did not ask her to reveal it, preferring to leave it to Alice, who longed to make it known to her friend, yet on Fanny's account she refrained from doing so, and resolved to conquer or endure it alone. Clive and Fanny were the frequent topics of conversation at the Cottage, and Alice was busy planning some surprise for them when they assumed the responsibility of housekeeping.

"I am surprised you find time to accomplish so much, Alice," said Mrs. Howard.

"I hardly know myself, but I suppose it is because I find so much pleasure in working for those I love."

She had found teaching somewhat burdensome at

first, but each day's experience made it easier until she felt pleasure in the discharge of her duties. Formerly, Lucy had defied her authority, but since the child had been under the influence of Mrs. Howard, Alice had less difficulty in exacting obedience than she expected. Sometimes, however, Lucy's temper became uncontrollable, when Mrs. Howard's authority interfered with success, and a rebellion was avoided. The children were fond of their teacher, and it was now "Cousin Alice" as it had formerly been "Aunt Fanny."

Willie had been a very healthy child, and required but little care, but now he began to show symptoms of debility. He was fretful, and demanded his mother's attention, so that the care of the other children principally devolved upon Alice. Willie grew worse, and cried, especially at night, almost incessantly, giving his mother great anxiety. Heretofore, during her hours of watching, when sickness entered the household, she had received aid and encouragement from her husband, but now she must bear these burdens alone.

One night, Willie grew worse so rapidly, that his anxious mother resolved to send for the physician in the morning, and as soon as the dawn appeared she awakened Anna whom she sent to Mr. Walton's to ask Henry to send Dr. Clive.

Mrs. Walton soon came, when she found the child very ill; and by the time the Doctor arrived his

symptoms had become serious. Willie was in his mother's arms when the physician, taking a seat near, in his calm, quiet manner, looked at his watch, then placing his fingers on the invalid's wrist, earnestly watched his patient some minutes without saying a word. After a while, which to Mrs. Howard seemed an age, he inquired how long the child had been ill.

"You consider him very ill?" said Mrs. Walton.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Have you any fears of convulsions, Doctor?"

"Yes."

Mrs. Howard, who understood the Doctor's mood, had refrained from asking any questions, but she knew he was anxious. The thought of losing her darling child was agonizing, but she tried to suppress her grief, though her efforts were ineffectual. The Doctor gave directions about the patient, left some medicine, and then for the first time addressed Mrs. Howard.

"This child," said he, "must be kept perfectly quiet. I will return in a few hours." He then told the mother what to do in case of convulsions.

Aunt Jenny, whose experiences with the suffering rendered her presence invaluable, took Willie from his mother's arms to relieve her, and requested that water might be heated to be in readiness if needed. The child was unconscious, but the movement of his eyes and the nerves about his mouth indicated convulsions.

When the other children saw Willie, who, to them,

appeared dead, they began to cry, and to remove them from the scene, Mrs. Walton suggested that they should be taken to her house, to stay with Mary.

Mrs. Howard approved of the plan, but detained Anna, as she might be needed at home. Therefore, Lucy and Lillie were sent away, and Anna was cautioned not to cry lest it should distress her little brother.

"O mamma, is Willie going to die? Will God take him away, as He did papa?"

"I do not know, my darling. Whatever He does will be right."

"Is it kind for Him to take my dear, only brother, mamma?"

"It is kind, my child, though we may not be willing He should."

Mrs. Howard was struggling with her own heart, for she was conscious that there was only the faintest hope for him, yet she held to that with the firmness a drowning man clings to a proffered rope.

"Mamma," said Anna, "if I ask God to spare Willie, won't He?"

"Perhaps He may."

After the answer given, she frequently went to her room, and kneeling down, besought Him with tears, saying, "Dear heavenly Father, make little brother well again, and then mamma, Lillie, and I will be so happy. Oh, do, please, Father, for Jesus' sake."

Coming from her room, she would watch the little

sufferer, but seeing no signs that her prayer was heard, she would return to solicit more earnestly the desired blessing.

Finally, her mother, thinking it was too much for the child's sensitive nature, sent her from the sick room.

A few hours after the Doctor left, Willie had a convulsion, as had been feared, and this was followed by others, so that when Dr. Clive returned, and saw the condition of his patient, he remained through the night, and did not leave him until all danger had passed.

The news of Willie's illness brought the neighbors to the Cottage to make inquiries and offer their services. In a country neighborhood, each one is interested in the affairs of all the others, and if any one is in trouble, the feelings of all the rest are in sympathy. Has any one been especially prosperous, all the neighbors are interested, not always without envy, for that is incident to human nature, but no one missed a friend in time of need, in a New England country town, at the time represented in this story, though occasionally the officious kindness of the people was annoying, especially when one was ill, and quietness was indispensable.

It is not always agreeable to have one's private business inspected and planned by one's neighbors, or pointed questions asked concerning affairs that ought to be kept secret, but many of these unpleas-

ant conditions can be overlooked on account of the genuinely kind acts done and feelings expressed.

The next day, Willie appeared so much better, that the other children were permitted to return home, greatly to their joy, and the little invalid smiled at seeing them. His mother could repress her feelings no longer, for her nerves had been severely taxed by anxiety, watching, and loss of sleep; hence there was a reaction. Aunt Jenny had returned, after attending to her own family, and persuaded Mrs. Howard to seek rest in sleep, while she would take her place. Willie, after the crisis had passed, began to amend, and improved so rapidly that, in the course of a week, the usual family and school duties were resumed.

Housekeepers of the present day may be perplexed to understand how Mrs. Howard could accomplish so much, and apparently with so little effort. It was chiefly due to her excellent methods, though something must be attributed to the more simple mode of living then than now. Every member of the family did something towards the general welfare of the whole. As soon as the children could walk, she began to teach them habits of order, and when play hours were over their toys must be collected and placed in a box used for the purpose, by their own little hands. As soon as they were three years old they began to dress and undress themselves, and though at first slow and awkward, she did not say, as some mothers do when attempting to teach inex-

perienced fingers, that it requires so much time and patience she preferred to do it herself. Mrs. Howard had a place for everything, and the children soon learned that each article must be in its appropriate place. She obliged them to wait upon themselves when possible, and it was not often they were heard to say, "Mamma, where are my dolls and toys?" If by any carelessness on their part they had been lost, they must do without them, for the other members of the family must not be taken from their work to look after the missing articles. Nails and hooks were within reach of short arms, so that when outside garments were removed they could be placed on them by the owners. The daughters were taught not only to help themselves, but to assist their mother also in her domestic duties, sewing, and knitting. When Dr. Clive placed Lucy under her care, he insisted she should be taught in all these branches of domestic affairs, but her teacher found it a difficult task at first, as the child had no idea of order. The house presented a scene of wild confusion, quite unknown in the history of Glen Cottage, when this undisciplined child first came there, but later there was a great change in many respects, so that Mrs. Howard was surprised and gratified at the improvement her pupil had made. This result was partly due to the example of the Howard children, for when Lucy saw Anna and Lillie orderly and helpful, and heard their mother commend them, even if they sometimes failed, she

desired to emulate them, but it often required more skill and patience than she could command, when her temper would assert its power; but these demonstrations became less frequent as she became accustomed to Mrs. Howard's calm, decided manners, and understood that she could neither frighten nor persuade her teacher, nor exhaust her patience; and when Lucy fully understood this she seldom attempted it.

When Dr. Clive decided to introduce to his home a second wife, he requested Mrs. Howard to impart the news to Lucy, supposing his child would express decided opinions on the subject.

Had she never been acquainted with Mrs. Howard, she might, perhaps, have been pleased with the idea of having a new mother, at least until her will had been opposed by that of the stranger, but she had become so ardently attached to her friend at the Cottage, whom she regarded as a mother, that the idea of any other person sustaining that relation aroused a feeling of strong opposition.

"Lucy," said Mrs. Howard, seating the child in her lap, "your mother, who died before you were old enough to remember her, loved you very much. Do you not think you would have loved her?"

"Yes," said the child, placing her arms around her friend, and kissing her, "just as I love you."

"Would n't you like another mother, to love and care for you?"

"You are my mamma, for you take care of me."

"I cannot always care for you, Lucy. Sometime you will go home to live with your papa, and then you will need a mother."

"I shall always live with you and I don't want another mamma."

"Your father is going to bring home a new mother, and I hope you will love her."

"I shan't love her. I don't want any mamma but you," was the decided reply.

Mrs. Howard did not pursue the subject any further then, but after Mrs. Clive came to her new home, she and Alice often spoke of the step-mother in Lucy's presence as a kind lady, fond of children. This excited the child's curiosity. Mrs. Clive had sent her a wax doll and several other presents, which made a favorable impression on Lucy's mind, though she could not be induced to say she liked the stranger, or preferred her to Mrs. Howard. In a few days the Doctor came for his daughter to present her to his companion, but she did not rush to her arms, as was her custom with her friends, but was shy and reserved. She was afraid she might be compelled to leave Glen Cottage, but Mrs. Clive's manner was such as to win the child's confidence, and in the course of a week she had become quite reconciled to the new arrangements, though she frequently inquired when she could return to the Howards.

As Lucy had improved so much and was in a way of improving still more, her father considered it best for

her to return to Mrs. Howard's and remain for the present, if his wife did not feel injured. When the child understood she was to return, she seemed very happy and said she had two mothers, "Mamma Howard and Mamma Doctor." The Howards were delighted when she returned, as she added so much life and pleasure to the family, by her lively ways and merry laugh.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ADIEU TO ALMA MATER.

"Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."

CLIVE LAYTON spent the few days before Commencement with his mother. There was a strong likeness between them, not only in looks, but in their moral and intellectual qualities. Her husband having died when Clive was a lad, Mrs. Layton was accustomed to rely on her son, and thus a strong bond of sympathy existed between them. She was his confidant and friend, entering into his plans and encouraging his aspirations, notwithstanding the difference in their ages and relations. The mother had retained the freshness of her earlier days in an eminent degree, and could participate in all the hopes, joys, and pursuits of youth with enthusiasm. She had, in no small degree, laid the foundation of Clive's high moral character, strengthened by his conscientious regard for his mother's instructions. She would attend the graduation exercises of her son, who had invited Fanny, her brother and his family to be present, and had made preparations to entertain the party.

Fanny was somewhat excited at the thought of meeting Clive's mother, and at the same time was anxious that her brother should receive a favorable

impression of her betrothed, but more especially that the latter should do honor to himself in the Commencement exercises. With all these anxieties she could not rest the night previous to the ceremonies nor did she have an appetite for breakfast. Mr. Sherwood, with his wife, Fanny, and Kate Hastings, went in his own carriage, and the ride and fresh air brought the color to Fanny's cheeks, and lustre to her eyes, so that, when they arrived at Dartmouth, she looked as well as her friends could wish.

Clive had an honorable part assigned him in the exercises, and when he appeared before the large audience of attentive listeners, he looked pale and seemed excited at first, but his agreeable voice, form, and manners soon attracted the audience, which inspired him with courage, and at the close, he was highly applauded. His essay was full of valuable thoughts; his language elegant, and his gestures graceful, so that his most fastidious friends were charmed. There were two in the assembly who were anxious when he appeared on the platform, but their fears were changed into joyful pride when he retired amid the applause of his college mates. Paul Crawford, another graduate, was cheered for his wit, and became the life of the company at Clive's entertainment after the exercises; and by his easy and agreeable manners, made himself admired by all.

Mr. Sherwood met with a number of his classmates who came from different parts of the country to cele-

brate the anniversary of their graduation. One object of his presence at the Commencement was to gain some knowledge of Layton's talents before appointing him principal of Clermont Academy. He was highly gratified at the result, and decided to secure his services, therefore he invited Clive to visit Clermont, and become acquainted with the institution.

The next day Clive Layton bade adieu to his Alma Mater where he had spent four years, the happiest of his life, and now was to enter upon the active duties of his chosen profession. He made a visit to Clermont, and was pleased with the town, and after meeting the trustees, was appointed principal of the Academy, and would begin his labors in two weeks.

Fanny participated in the pleasure Clive felt at the prospect before him, and became interested in the town, the walks, and charming scenery, the Academy, and especially for its having been the place where many of her young friends had been educated. Mrs. Howard and Alice received frequent communications from her, giving the particulars of her experience, of Clive's success, and their hopes of future happiness, expressing her fears that she might fail in her duties, and making inquiriesa bout affairs at the Cottage, etc.

"O Paulina," she wrote, "my thoughts and feelings are so contradictory I cannot understand them. My experience for the last few weeks has been so strange and unexpected that I almost believe I am in Fairyland, and can never return to my dull prosy life. My

regard for Clive controls every other feeling. I could not be happy if separated from him, yet when he speaks of our marriage another year, it causes me anxiety, for I have considered that event as one in the distant future. I am so young, ignorant, and inexperienced. What if I should fail to make our domestic life happy?"

Alice received a letter from Crawford soon after he graduated, so delicate in its expression of friendship, so carefully guarded in giving utterance to a stronger feeling, lest it might wound, so grateful for her beneficial influence over him, and directing him to a better life, so full of hope and promise for the future, that she felt a deeper respect for him than ever before. Her reply to this letter accorded with her previous manner toward him. He did not expect anything different, but he cherished her sincere expressions of regard, and determined to overcome his repugnance to apply himself to some useful labor, and began to seek a worthy object. His mind was assuming a serious mood in regard to his own responsibilities. He felt that his life had been a failure; that he had lived only for his own pleasure, which was beneath the dignity of any human being. How ignoble all his purposes seemed. Even his pursuit of knowledge was merely to gratify his tastes. How he had wasted or buried the talents heaven had bestowed for a good purpose. He felt a desire to change his whole manner of life, but how to do it was a question he could not solve.

He did not, however, feel his own weakness so completely, as to seek for higher wisdom; he only saw "through a glass darkly." He was led into the perfect light of day, by a severer discipline. Those whom our heavenly Father loves, He chastens, and often those whom He employs for great usefulness, He purifies by fire.

A short time after Alice received Paul's letter, she went to the village to visit some of her patients, and after her return she seemed depressed, and her eyes filled with tears. Mrs. Howard, noticing her manner, inquired whether anything unusual had made her sad.

"Nothing unusual, dear Paulina, but I have been trying in vain to work out a problem in the Divine dispensation, but the more I think of it, the more I am perplexed," replied Alice with a sigh.

"What is the problem that distresses you so much?"

"The Creator has made the human heart with great capacities and exquisite sensibilities, and yet in His economy, this delicate organ is constantly acted upon by the most discordant agencies. Its tender chords are frequently put to a painful tension, or snapped asunder by some rude hand. Oh, why was it made capable of feeling so keenly?" Overpowered by her emotions, she covered her face and burst into tears.

Mrs. Howard placed Alice's head upon her shoulder, and tenderly caressed her, striving to soothe her grief.

"Let me help you bear your burdens, dear Alice;

your sympathies have been too highly excited; your physical strength is not equal to such demands. The flood-gates of sorrow have been forced open. Let nature have her course, and these tears will relieve your burdened heart."

Alice wept passionately for a few moments, then her grief had spent itself, and she became calm, and, smiling, said: —

"Now I can command myself; my feelings obtained the mastery, for a time, but I will trust in my Heavenly Father."

"Yes, Alice, we must walk by faith. There are mysteries in His dealings with His creatures we cannot understand; but He does not see fit to explain them to us, therefore we may conclude it is not best for us to know them, but what we do not understand now, we may hereafter."

"That hereafter," said Alice, "sometimes appears very near, and I have a longing, at times, to penetrate its dark mysteries. Perhaps we shall understand why your dear husband was so suddenly removed, leaving you to mourn the remainder of your life, or why poor Millie was permitted to love, be betrayed, and die so sadly." Tears came into her eyes again.

"Yesterday," said Mrs. Howard, "Willie was in the garden with me. He is rejoicing in his newly discovered powers of locomotion, and takes great delight in running about, but his feet often trip, and he gets some bruises. In his attempts to pull roses

from the bushes, thorns lacerated his fingers, when he cried from the pain. Sometime after, I saw him with a large worm he was just putting in his mouth when I made a sudden spring and arrested his movement. He was so displeased, it was some time before he ceased to cry. I think he is a good illustration of what we are in relation to some of our Heavenly Father's dealings with us. We are often as blind, ignorant, and self-willed as a little child, and He allows us on account of our pride and self-will to have our own way as a punishment for our presumption."

"Though you often grieve little Willie," said Alice, "by withholding some fancied pleasure, yet he comes to your arms for protection and sympathy just the same, so we should trust our heavenly Father with the same child-like confidence."

Alice did not reveal what wounded her feelings so deeply. One of her acquaintances, in a heartless manner — it might only have been carelessness, but to be careless of the feelings of others is heartless — said to her :—

"Then Clive Layton is engaged to Fanny Sherwood. Well, I would be even with him, if he deserted me in that way. I would set my cap for Paul Crawford. He is rich and handsome, and much the best fellow. Who would want to marry a schoolmaster?"

This was said by young Merill who could never forgive Layton for carrying off his prize.

Alice felt the taunt, for such she considered it, and

was offended at his coarse familiarity, but she did not trust herself to reply, and felt unhappy for some time. She said to herself: "Did the public believe that Clive had rejected her unspoken love, or if he had, that he would make it known to others? Did people believe she was foolish enough to marry to spite a false lover?" She began to distrust everyone, and sighed for a quiet retreat from the harsh judgment of the world. How great is the misery often caused by a thoughtless word; how much greater, then, those spoken in malice. It has been well said, that words are like arrows shot at random. They often wound where least expected. Such an arrow had so penetrated the heart of Alice, that she was reluctant to meet her gay associates, lest she might suffer again from the same cause. She especially avoided Merill and his friend Owen, who was very repulsive to her, especially as he insisted on seeking her society.

CHAPTER XXX.

RESOLUTIONS.

"Rise, behold thy place appointed,
God has work for thee to do;
Ponder well thy perfect model,
Trace thine outline bold and true."

THE time with Clive and Fanny passed swiftly away, for they were living in an ideal world, where everything was adorned with roseate hues. They returned from their visit to Clermont, and Clive was planning his work in school, where, a short time before, he had been appointed principal. Mr. Sherwood's house would be his home until he could have one of his own. Crawford came, ostensibly to see his old friends, but really to hear from Alice. He had long conversations with Clive respecting his plans and views.

"Paul," said Layton, "you have greatly changed of late. You are laying aside your indifference and are manifesting a greater inclination for a useful life. I am happy to see this, but I hope you will not lay aside your natural cheerfulness."

"You see me on the stool of repentance," said Paul in his bantering tone, "and it is proper that I should have a sober face. Seriously, I have spent many of

my best days to little purpose. To be sure, I have passed through a regular course of study, with a fair reputation, if I can trust the Faculty, but for all that, where am I to-day? Without a profession selected, and, what is worse, I find it nearly impossible to settle upon one. I am not satisfied to lead an idle life, but what can I do?"

"I suspect if your father had been a poor man, and you had been obliged to depend upon your own exertions, as I have done, you would not now be in such a dilemma," said Layton, laughing.

"You were always fortunate, Clive; you have not only yourself to care for, but a charming little fairy, who clings to you as the child does to its mother, but I have no such incentive."

"True," replied Clive, "a man alone is less than a man, since his better half is wanting; but, Paul, with your attractions and means, you ought not to shrink from fulfilling your destiny."

"What, that of a family man?" inquired Paul.

"Yes, if you consider that your calling. Seriously, Crawford, why do you not devote your fine talents to something noble and worthy of yourself?"

"I never was more serious in my life than when I told you that was my desire, but I am still in the dark as for what I am adapted. I suppose you will hardly believe me when I say that I am willing to perform much labor to make myself useful to some poor, unfortunate creature more unhappy than I am."

"Doing good to others is excellent medicine for heart disease," said Layton.

Paul did not tell his friend that he had been bestowing charity in various ways, and that he had supplied Alice with the means of relieving the poor under her charge, and that he was trying to emulate her in work, only in a different way, but these efforts had failed to quiet his troubled mind. His mother's unaffected piety commended her faith to his consideration, and she had listened to an account of his doubts, his hopes, his fears, and his aspirations. She could not argue with him, but she gave him counsel and encouragement.

Paul and Alice corresponded regularly, but their letters were only those of friendship. Though it was unsatisfactory to Paul, still he cherished them as his most valued treasures.

Crawford's father had desired him, after his graduation, to spend some time in travelling abroad, and he now urged him to embrace a favorable opportunity for a visit to Europe. Paul once favored the scheme, but since his acquaintance with Alice Bradford, he had thought but little of it. As his friends urged it so strongly he yielded, and prepared for an absence of several months. Before leaving, he informed Alice of his determination and asked the privilege of continuing their correspondence. He closed his letter by saying that his regard for her was unalterable, and he hoped she would be true to her promise, if she

could not give him any further encouragement. She replied by renewing her pledge, but did not think she had changed her mind. Had she given him the slightest encouragement the voyage would have been abandoned.

In a few days Crawford sailed for a foreign land, but he could not say how long he might be absent; he would be governed by circumstances.

Clive entered upon his career as principal, and Fanny returned to her sister, Mrs. Howard. Alice, whose delicate health required rest and change, visited the Doctor's friends in her mother's native place. The return of Fanny was a joyful event to the inmates of Glen Cottage, since they had counted the days from the reception of her last letter, and had planned various agreeable surprises for "Aunty" when she came, yet no one did what she purposed to do, but each one was intent on relating what was uppermost in her own mind.

Fanny listened to all their little tales of what had happened during her absence, the children all talking together, each one trying to gain her attention. There was so much to be said that they were allowed to sit up half an hour later this evening, and after the younger members of the household had retired, the older ones remained until a late hour, conversing upon topics interesting to both. There was no reserve, as Fanny expressed her feelings and wishes, her hopes and fears to her sister, as she would to a

mother, and sought her advice in all her plans, as any child might have done. She had always been regarded as such, and indulged as the youngest of the family usually is, and being conscious of the fact, she mistrusted her own judgment and relied upon others, but after coming to Jefferson, Mrs. Howard always encouraged her to depend more upon herself, and sometimes she intentionally withheld her advice until Fanny had formed a decision. The subject which, at this time and subsequently, was most interesting to the sisters was Fanny's marriage and the preparations for housekeeping involving so many duties and responsibilities.

"My dear Paulina, what shall I do without your advice, as I suppose I must leave you some time?"

"You will then be obliged to depend upon yourself to a great extent."

"Can't I go to Clive for counsel?"

"Certainly, in many instances, when you are perplexed about what duty is, but you ought not to trouble him with all your little cares; you must sometimes bear them alone. He will have his burdens, and when he returns to his home, instead of being annoyed with a list of grievances which some forethought on your part might have prevented, he will expect to find an asylum of rest from the perplexities and cares of school."

"Paulina, the more I think about it, the greater my anxiety that I may not meet the expectations of Clive."

"If he is reasonable, as I believe he is, he will not expect perfection in his companion, and also will remember his own deficiencies which will need indulgence. Between the most exemplary husbands and wives, mutual forbearance and charity are constantly needed."

Many were the noble resolutions Fanny made and the high aims to which she aspired for her future conduct, but which, doubtless, she found it difficult always to attain; yet forming good resolutions gave her strength and courage.

CHAPTER XXXI.

PARENTAL DUTIES.

"Be obeyed when thou commandest, but command not often."

WILLIE became more interesting and necessary to the family at Glen Cottage every day, and though his mother did not love him more than she loved the other children, still the fact of his being her only son, early deprived of a father's care, caused a peculiar tenderness for him, while his sex made her feel anxious about his future career. At this early age he had given positive evidence of possessing a strong will, and his mother had several struggles with him as to which should conquer. Her theory was to teach the child to submit to his parent as early as he could understand the nature of obedience. In the case of her two eldest children, she had succeeded after a few contests, especially with Anna, but she met with greater opposition from Willie in his efforts to assert his independence. When seated with the family at the table, his mother insisted that he should behave with propriety. The little child had a seat next his mother, that position always being given to the youngest member. For a few times she allowed him some liberties, until he became accustomed to his new position, when he amused Lucy and Lillie by his roguish

ways. He would try to grasp the tea-pot with his little plump hands, and when his mother gently rapped his fingers he would shut his eyes and withdraw them, then open and close his eyes again and make another attempt. He would pat his tin plate on one side with both hands, then turn it over and perform the same operation on the other side, place it on his head, and finally toss it about until it rolled under the table, which caused a burst of laughter from the other children. His mother recovered the plate and placed it before him, when, seeing it amused them, he took it and was going to throw it on the floor again. His mother said, "No, Willie must not do it."

The little child held it for a moment, with his eyes on his mother, looking roguishly and defiantly, as if not quite sure that she was in earnest, then threw it down. She replaced it, after repeating her command, but the plate was thrown to the floor with more violence, when he was removed from the table and seated on the floor at some distance.

Willie was taken by surprise at this sudden change, and for a moment was silent, but as soon as he comprehended his situation he began to scream and show signs of anger, though his mother pretended not to notice him, when he arose and went to her to be taken to his place at table.

"No, Willie has been naughty. Mamma cannot let him come."

His pleading availed nothing; she was inflexible,

but he continued his pleadings until breakfast was over, when he went to sleep crying in his mother's arms. The next day the battle was renewed, as Mrs. Howard supposed it would be, when the plate was again dashed to the floor. This time she insisted that Willie should take it up; he refused to obey, yet she repeated her command, when he came to her with tears, wishing to be taken in her arms; but she refused to grant the favor until he obeyed. One of Lillie's books lay on the floor; he brought that. "No, Willie, the plate." He then brought Lucy's doll; that was put aside, while his mother continued to enforce her command; but the child with tears refused to obey. This contest went on for more than an hour, before the mother won the victory, when her repressed feelings found relief in tears.

Willie never attempted to resist so stubbornly again, though for a number of years there were occasional rebellions, but not so continued or obstinate.

Lillie's attachment to her brother was very ardent, and when he was corrected she would weep, which made it more trying to her mother. When Willie was born, his little sister at first considered him an intruder, and was jealous as she saw he received so much of their mother's love and care, but she soon forgot her fancied neglect, and became greatly attached to her brother whom she had considered her rival. As the children grew older, their love strengthened for each other, and Willie was never so

happy as when his little sister allowed him to have her playthings, though his rough hands often broke or injured them. After he was old enough to get into danger, like a guardian angel she was near to shield him even in youth and manhood, when temptations assailed him. Fortunate is the youth who is blessed with a sister's affection so deep, constant, and unselfish.

Fanny was now looking forward to the event that, to her, was the most important in her earthly life, when her interests would be united to those of another. It did not appear to her what it does to many thoughtless persons who assume its responsibilities, for she had given the subject much thought. A perceptible change had taken place in her character, and instead of being one of the most thoughtless and happiest of young girls, she became thoughtful, and anxious to be useful and make others happy.

The practice of married people to "board," sometimes, at hotels, boarding-houses, or private families, had not come into fashion, and would it not be better for them to follow the earlier custom? The name of home is divested of its charms when associated with these places. What constitutes a home in its highest sense? the question has been asked. "Not four walls alone, but where all the domestic virtues cluster around the names of husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister, son, and daughter; where all the conjugal, filial, and fraternal feelings are in healthful

exercise ; where mutual burdens are lightened, mutual joys and sorrows are shared ; where are domestic confidences in which a stranger should never participate. It is where the heart's deepest affections may be expressed in perfect safety."

It was such a home that Clive Layton and Fanny Sherwood pictured to themselves, and such they hoped to make it, as nearly as possible. The thought of avoiding the responsibilities of the domestic relations never occurred to them. They bravely and cheerfully assumed these obligations, trusting Divine Providence for success.

Clive had nothing with which to begin his chosen profession but a resolute will and honorable purpose, but he was free from any pecuniary embarrassments. He believed that with frugality and industry they might venture to start in the race of life helping and encouraging each other, but to attain this object, they must be simple and prudent in their habits. Mr. Sherwood advised Clive to have a home of his own when needed, and offered to rent him a neat little cottage until he was able to purchase one. The proposal met Layton's approbation and he and Fanny entered upon their housekeeping plans.

Houses were not then furnished at short notice, therefore there must be much planning and labor before the cottage would be ready for its occupants. This care devolved upon Fanny and her friends, therefore there was diligent work at Glen Cottage for

some months, where the thimbles and scissors were in constant requisition. Sheets, pillow cases, table cloths, towels, bed quilts, and comforters were made from the masses of cloth and prints in Mrs. Howard's work-closet. Mrs. Walton presented as a gift several yards of bird's-eye linen, while other friends brought their contributions.

After Alice returned from her journey, she assisted with her ready needle, while Fanny's experience in planning work under her sister's training was very serviceable, and though she gave directions, she sought her sister's judgment. Several "quiltings" occurred at the Cottage, when the neighbors, as was the custom, were invited to assist. Even the little girls were anxious to bear a part in the preparations, and Lucy and Anna made very wise remarks when sewing their long seams.

"O dear," said Lucy, as she threaded her needle for the fifth time, in hemming one towel, "I want to finish this so I can go and play, but my thread plagues me so."

"Look here, see what a long seam I've got to sew," said Anna, and sighed at the prospect.

"I won't be married," said Lucy, "and make everybody sew, sew, all day long, and little girls prick their fingers, will you, Anna?"

"I don't know; I suppose I must," she replied.

"I won't, anyhow."

The time quickly passed, as it generally does when people are very busy. Winter came again with its

storms and cold, but the inmates of Glen Cottage were so occupied with work and teaching, that there was little time to think of the winter, when outdoor exercises were impracticable.

Dr. Clive and the Waltons came quite often with their teams, and gave the different members of the family a ride, sometimes for pleasure and sometimes for shopping, as there were so many things to be purchased, so many little closets and corners to be filled in the new home, that it seemed that there was no limit to the wants of housekeepers.

"What shall I ever do with all my goods, Paulina?"

"You will find use for all you have, and more, Fanny."

"Dear me; house-keeping is a complicated business, is n't it? How awkward I shall feel in my first attempts. I shall cut and burn my fingers, soil and tear my dress, and blister my face trying to cook a dinner," said Fanny, laughing at the picture she drew.

"Yes, and worse still, spoil the dinner and your husband's temper besides," remarked Alice.

"Oh, my husband's temper is faultless. Nothing could spoil that."

"You are mistaken, my dear," said Mrs. Howard, "if you consider any man's temper incapable of being ruffled sometimes; but when you see a storm arising you should have all sunshine about you."

"Paulina, did you ever have any domestic storms?"

"Not storms, exactly, but we had our trials, and the

current of domestic life did not always flow smoothly; but Harvey and I made a promise, before our marriage, that when one of us felt vexed or angry the other should take special pains to keep cool. We strictly adhered to the rule, and thus avoided many unpleasant scenes."

"I shall love my husband, and he will regard me with so deep affection that we shall not dispute or quarrel."

"You may not quarrel. I hope your conscience and sense of propriety will prevent that, but love is not the only human passion. There will be occasions when you will differ in opinions, and when it will be necessary for one to yield."

"Do you think the wife ought always to yield to the husband?"

"A kind and reasonable husband will not always require it, but unfortunately all husbands are not always kind and reasonable, then it is best, for the sake of peace, that the wife should yield, unless by submitting she would violate the Divine law. Neither are all wives reasonable and conscientious."

"Clive has a firm will," said Alice, looking archly at Fanny. "I always had to yield to him when we were children."

"I am glad he has; I shall have something to lean upon. A man without firmness is like a broken staff. I could neither love nor respect a weak-minded man," said Fanny.

While they were talking, the wind whistled through the grove and around the Cottage, which gave Mrs. Howard a sudden start.

"It appears like a storm," remarked Alice, going to the window to observe the clouds.

"What day of the month is it?" inquired Fanny, unconscious that her question sent an arrow to her sister's heart and the color from her cheeks.

"It is the fifteenth," replied Mrs. Howard, then quickly arose and withdrew.

Her apparent distress reminded Fanny that it was the anniversary of the death of her brother-in-law. She regretted her thoughtless question. Mrs. Howard had not forgotten the sad incident, for she had been thinking about it all day, and had suffered a mental struggle similar to the one experienced on the sudden death of her husband. After a time of deep sorrow she regained her self-control, but the family had observed the suppressed state of mind she cherished for several days. The return of each anniversary of her husband's death was the occasion of the same mental distress for many years, until time had gradually soothed her grief; but as long as she lived it was a season of chastened sorrow.

It was now mid-winter, when the snow covered the ground, and trees, fences, and walls were enveloped in a white sheet, and had it not been for the busy thoughts planning, and the diligent hands working within doors, life at the Cottage might have been

monotonous and lonely during the tedious winter. Any event, the most trivial, became important to the inmates. Two letters came regularly from Clive every week, but these did not belong to the family repository. Occasionally a message came from one of the Sherwoods, but Alice felt she had no interest in them further than that they were from those she respected. Where was Paul? She had not heard from him since he sailed, and he promised to write frequently. Had he forgotten her so soon? She was losing spirit, when one day Henry Walton, the messenger of the family, appeared with a package of letters.

"Oh, I am so glad to see you," said Fanny. "Have you brought any news?"

"I have something for Alice."

"Thank you, Henry. I hope you have brought good news," said Alice, extending her hand for the letter.

Henry drew one from his pocket and examined the postmark very leisurely.

"It seems," said he, "that you have friends abroad," with a slight twinkle in his eye.

Alice colored and said, "Please let me have the letter," taking it from his hand, and retiring to the window to read it.

"Perhaps I have the introduction," he remarked, producing another in the same handwriting.

"Have n't you one for me?" inquired Fanny, with a little disappointment in her tone.

"You have had nearly all the letters; now you must go without," replied the messenger.

Alice had opened her letters, but seemed troubled to understand something they contained. Henry watched her perplexity, and after some delay produced two more letters, saying, "Too much of a good thing at once is not wholesome."

He started and went as far as the barn, then returned and gave Fanny her letter, which he pretended had just been discovered in his pocket. She eagerly broke the seal and read it, when a gleam of pleasure sparkled in her eyes, and a smile rippled over her countenance.

"What is it, Birdie?" inquired Paulina.

"Clive has a vacation at the end of the week, and he says we may expect to see him here."

"We shall all give him a hearty welcome," replied her sister.

Alice was a long time reading Paul's letters, which gave an account of his travels, with some passages Alice omitted to read aloud.

"He makes one request of you, Fanny, that you will let him know when your wedding occurs, as he will return to attend it."

"When Clive comes we will settle that question."

"Is he coming soon?" inquired Alice, a slight blush suffusing her cheeks.

"I expect him next week."

The next week brought him, notwithstanding the

deep snows and the difficulties of travelling. On the evening of his arrival he went to the Cottage, in spite of the deep snow between the village and Mrs. Howard's.

"Fanny, you look thin and pale," said Clive, after their first salutation.

"Perhaps I do," she replied, "for I have been very busy sewing and have had little exercise in the open air."

"Let the sewing go. We will do without bed quilts and blankets, before you injure your health and the roses fade from your cheeks."

"That is just like a man," said Fanny laughing. "Do you suppose sheets, blankets, and quilts grow ready made, or do you imagine you can sleep during a December night without them?" placing her hand on his shoulder. He drew her close to his side and looked into her eyes as if to fathom their depth.

"Not quite so stupid, my little fairy, but I want you to preserve your" — he was going to say charms, but checked himself and said "health."

"What will you say to these friends?" referring to Mrs. Howard and Alice. "They have been taxing their energies to the utmost for us."

"I was selfish. I acknowledge my faults. I thank them with all my heart, and hope I may never forget my obligations to them," extending his hand to Mrs. Howard and Alice.

"Clive," said Alice, with a slight agitation, "I have always desired to see you happy, and if I can con-

tribute in any small degree to that object, I shall be gratified."

"That is like you, Alice; you were always so unselfish." Had Clive known the truth, he would have felt there was still greater cause for this remark.

Layton's trial at the academy had been a success. The school was thriving, and he was popular with both the pupils and the trustees. It was quite certain he would be permanently settled as its principal, therefore he desired a home of his own as soon as convenient. The time for their wedding was discussed. Clive wished an early day, but Fanny desired to defer it some months. Finally, after some discussion, it was decided to wait until June.

"It seems a long time to wait," said Layton, as they stood at the window on the evening of the anniversary of their engagement.

"Do you remember the event?" inquired Fanny.

"It will never be forgotten," was the earnest reply.

The setting sun appeared from a cloud, and cast his rays upon them for the third time, and they both recalled their vow.

"This scene, so interesting to us, we will regard as a favorable omen of our future happiness," observed Clive.

"Yes, and may we have perpetual sunshine in our hearts and home," replied Fanny.

After a week's absence, Layton returned to resume his school duties which had been interrupted by his absence.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE BRIDAL.

"The face of all the world is changed, I think,
Since first I heard the footsteps of thy soul."

PAUL CRAWFORD had hurried from one country to another, and from one object of interest to another, but had found nothing to satisfy that restless desire which agitated his mind and destroyed his happiness, though he saw much to gratify his taste and awaken his curiosity. The masters of art became a study for a time, but when his curiosity was satisfied, the old restlessness would return with greater vehemence than ever. He visited cathedrals venerable with age, hoping to find a solace for his troubled mind in their wonderful paintings and statues, and in listening to their music; but these did not give him the consolation he sought, while the worship was cold and formal. He tried the effect of natural scenery, which was more in harmony with his feelings, especially the solitude of the mountains and forests, where he felt that he stood face to face with the Creator's works. He lingered long in their vicinity until the season forced him to the city, where his unhappiness, which, for a time, had been soothed by contact with nature, returned. His letters did not reach Alice, as has

been seen, until after a long absence, therefore he had received no communication from her. He preserved her miniature which he persuaded Clive to loan him, and had a copy taken in Paris; but silence made him fear that she had entirely discarded him. It was while struggling with these disappointments that he received letters from Alice, Clive, and Fanny which gave him fresh courage and strengthened him for the strife. As Layton would not be married until June, he could prolong his visit to foreign countries and return in time to see his friend settled for life, and — well, what might happen, he could not say, and it was best he could not, for he was not prepared for the trial that awaited him.

Alice had improved somewhat by her journey in the autumn but only transiently, and soon the old languor returned with new symptoms of the insidious disease of which her mother died. She had kept this knowledge from her friends and appeared as usual, always calm and diligent. She participated in all the preparations for the wedding of her friends. Her constant labors and secret sorrows were more than her strength could endure, and when spring returned it prostrated her physical strength and depressed her spirits, and instead of the joy with which she had been accustomed to greet its return, it was a painful effort to take her usual walks. Nature appeared to her more lovely than ever before, and she regarded it in a different light since to her it was a

type of the Heavenly Land more beautiful than the visible world. She would sit in the arbor for hours gazing at the sky, the mountains, trees, meadows, and flowers, and listen to the song of the birds, the hum of the insects, sometimes alone and sometimes with friends about her. Her conversation, though cheerful, inclined to be on serious topics, especially with Mrs. Howard, and generally of future life. Her thoughts seemed to soar above this world, and her friends felt that she belonged more to heaven than earth.

One day, when alone with her, Mrs. Howard said,

"Alice you do not appear as well as usual; am I deceived?"

"Probably not," was the reply. "I have not felt quite as strong, but please say nothing about it until after Fanny has gone, as I do not wish to cause her and Clive any anxiety."

"You dear, generous girl, I cannot bear to see you suffer in silence. Will you not consult the Doctor about your health?"

"Not at present; I do not think, at least hope, there is any immediate cause of alarm."

This was in May, and a few days after, as she was dressing, she felt a sudden pain in her chest, and placing her handkerchief to her mouth she coughed, and on removing it, she noticed a bright scarlet spot on it. She understood its meaning and sank into a chair greatly depressed while the tears would flow,

though she strove hard to suppress them. She saw in that crimson spot her death warrant.

Life, until the last few months, had been desirable, and though, in the bitterness of her early grief, she felt it sometimes a burden, but hoped she had conquered, she was mistaken; there was one more conflict for her before she could claim the victor's crown. She desired to live that she might achieve noble deeds.

"Must I die so young, when life is yet incomplete? O Father, not my will, but Thine be done."

She regained her composure and appeared before the family as calm as usual, but when her uncle came that afternoon, she had a long private conversation with him, and after much persuasion she induced him not to remove her home until after Clive's wedding; but this permission was granted on condition that she would inform Mrs. Howard how she was, which she did, and received tender care and sympathy such only as a mother understands.

Paul had arrived in New York and wrote to the Doctor that he would be in Jefferson within a few days; and soon after he wrote to Alice, stating the day he would be there, and expressed the hope of finding her improved in health.

She had never alluded to her health in her letters to him, but Fanny had intimated that she was not as well as when he left; and when hearing from the Doctor a partial account of her condition, he became

very anxious. Soon after his arrival, he repaired to Glen Cottage, hoping to learn that the fears of her friends were groundless, or at least exaggerated.

Alice was expecting him, and tried to be very calm, so that to Crawford she seemed but little changed. She might be a trifle paler, he thought, but he was not certain, as the bloom was still on her cheeks. She received him in the same frank, cordial manner natural to her. He would have preferred to see some slight embarrassment, a drooping of the eyes, a slight trembling of the hand when he took it in his, but only one sign of tender emotion escaped her, — a gentle sigh. He noticed it, but mistook its meaning. She was thinking of the time when the truth must be known.

Crawford renewed his offer with earnest expressions of devotion, and Alice felt he ought to know the truth, but hesitated to disappoint his dearly cherished hopes. At length she told him she believed her life was very short, but did not give all the reasons for her judgment, leaving him to learn it by degrees. He could not be persuaded she would not recover; he believed she had magnified the danger, but notwithstanding his ardent hopes, he was anxious and discouraged.

Layton came the day after Crawford arrived. It had been arranged some time before, that Paul and Alice should act as groomsman and bridesmaid at the wedding. Paul and Clive years before had in jest

agreed that which of them married first, the other should act as groomsman, little supposing that a thoughtless remark would, in so short a time after their separation as college classmates, have its fulfilment in actual fact a few days after the two friends met at Glen Cottage.

Fanny selected June, the loveliest month of all the year, for the celebration of her marriage, because, as she affirmed, she wanted all nature to be cheerful and beautiful, an emblem of what she desired her wedded life to be. The day was perfect; the songs of the birds, the fragrance of the flowers, the gentle breezes from the meadows and hills, the freshness and beauty of vegetation, — all combined to render the day one of the "rare days" of which the poet sings. A small company assembled at the Cottage, at an early hour, to witness the ceremony, including Mr. Goodell and lady, Dr. and Mrs. Clive, Mrs. Howard and Anna, the Waltons and a few others. The bride was dressed in a simple white muslin, and wore a veil gracefully falling over her shoulders, and held a bouquet of sweet and beautiful flowers, while her hair was dressed in curls. Alice was dressed in a similar manner except the veil.

"Fanny is one of the sweetest brides I ever saw," remarked Mrs. Goodell.

Clive thought so too, and when he first saw her in her bridal costume, he stood entranced for a moment, she appeared so much more beautiful than he had

ever seen her before, while Alice seemed to Crawford an angel clothed in white robes. After the ceremony, Mr. Goodell turned to Paul Crawford and said he was ready to perform the same rite again, and thought the present a suitable occasion.

"I am quite willing," said Paul, "but you must obtain the bride's consent," looking toward Alice. She colored and replied, "It was better to have only one wedding at a time." Nothing would have pleased her friends better than the marriage of Paul and Alice.

Soon after the ceremony, the young couple took leave of their friends and started for their new home.

The parting was not without tears; Mrs. Howard, Alice, and the children all bade an affectionate adieu to Fanny and Clive with a heart full of love and tender regrets. Alice preserved her calmness until her friends had gone and then retired to her room. Her absence, at first, was not noticed, but as she did not make her appearance, Mrs. Howard went to see what was the cause. She had fainted and fallen on the bed. The Doctor, who had just left, was recalled, when restoratives were applied, but it was some time before any signs of life were perceived. Many of the guests had left, and to those who remained Mrs. Howard excused the absence of Alice on account of her fatigue, not wishing to arouse any alarm, or awaken any curiosity. Paul lingered, hoping to see her again.

"Mr. Crawford, we should like to have you remain with us to night," said Mrs. Howard. "Alice is not as well as usual, and the Doctor is obliged to leave."

"What is the matter? What has happened to Alice?" inquired Paul. Mrs. Howard told him she had fainted, probably from fatigue and excitement, but she hoped a few days of quiet rest would restore her.

The Doctor had felt much anxiety about Alice for some time, as she was so much like her mother in her constitution, he feared she might suffer in the same way. He had watched her symptoms very closely, and could not conceal the truth from his own judgment, but had not expressed his fears to any one until now. He told Mrs. Howard he feared a hemorrhage of the lungs, and charged her to keep Alice as quiet as possible.

Mrs. Howard was alone with Alice when she began to revive. She opened and then closed her eyes, an act she repeated several times, and then murmured something which Mrs. Howard did not understand. She inclined her head to catch the feeble accents, and heard the names of Clive and Fanny and "may it be the last."

"What is it, dear Alice?" inquired Mrs. Howard.

She opened her eyes again and recognized her friend.

"What did I say? Is any one else here?"

"No, we are alone."

"Come here, I love to have you near me," whispered Alice. "Have they all gone?"

"Yes, the company have all left."

"I mean Clive and Fanny."

"Yes, dear. Don't you remember you bade them good-bye?"

"O yes; I forgot. Was it long ago?"

"About an hour."

"Allow me to rest on your shoulder. Now let me take your hand. It makes me stronger, and I can bear it better."

"Bear what?" inquired Mrs. Howard. "Did you mean the pain?"

"Yes."

"Where is your pain, Alice?"

"It is right here," placing her hand on her heart. "It will soon be over, and I shall never suffer with it again. I have prayed for grace to carry me through this agony, and I shall triumph."

Mrs. Howard was sure that Alice had suffered from some concealed grief, and was she not correct in her suspicions as to the cause?

"How much you seem like my mother," said Alice. "She used to smooth my hair just as you do, and kiss my cheeks."

Alice was weeping, and her friend thought it would relieve her burdened heart, therefore allowed her to indulge her grief, believing it would be for her good. After a few moments of silence, she said, "Alice,

there is something that troubles you. I have noticed it for a long time. Would you not feel happier to confess your sorrow to some friend who could share it with you, and thus lighten it?"

"You, my dear Paulina, are the best and kindest friend I have, and the one whom I could entrust with a secret. I could not make it known before" — here she paused, and gathering courage went on — "Fanny became the companion of Clive Layton. Perhaps you can understand now the reason of my sorrow."

"Do you wish me to know that you loved Clive?"

"Yes; I never remember the time that I did not. At first it was a child love, then it became a deeper affection, gradually and imperceptibly, until I was awakened as from a dream, to a consciousness of my true sentiments, by his devotion to Fanny."

"And you have shown such devoted, unselfish interest in them," said Mrs. Howard.

"It was difficult at first, but after I became acquainted with Fanny, I loved her for her own as well as for Clive's sake, and resolved I would try to promote their happiness, but keep my grief a secret. I have one request to make. I shall not live long, and I wish you to say nothing about this confession until I am gone, then let Clive know how highly I regarded him, and believe I shall still cherish a devoted affection for him and Fanny in the world to which I am going, more exalted than I could here."

Mrs. Howard regarded her very gently and lov-

ingly, but was too deeply affected to say anything. It was what she had feared, but hoped might not be true.

From this time Alice seemed uniformly cheerful. This was the trial which she had dreaded, and for which she had seemed to receive new life. Aunt Hetty, who had been very lonely, said it was worth while to stay a little longer, if only for the pleasure of hearing her sweet voice, while Deacon Hayford and his wife had been almost inconsolable on account of her absence.

Mrs. Howard was very lonely, after Fanny and Alice left her home, and felt that life at the Cottage would be insupportable, but she had recourse to her old remedy for sadness, namely, employment. She resumed her labor of teaching which, in addition to her domestic cares, left but few idle moments on her hands. She committed to Anna almost the entire care of Lillie besides the charge of many of Lucy's lessons. Mrs. Walton proposed that Henry should spend the nights at the Cottage for company and protection. Mrs. Howard was very grateful for this favor, and the lad was so sensible and intelligent, so entertaining to the children, that their evenings were anticipated with great pleasure. After the younger children had retired, he would read aloud to Mrs. Howard and Anna who was allowed to remain an hour later than the others, and so the time passed less wearily than she feared.

Letters came often from her sister who had so many questions to ask, and so much to relate about her new life, that it was next to having her at Glen Cottage. In her first letter her sister wrote: —

DEAR PAULINA, — After spending a week with our mother and Thomas, we came to our own home. How strange it sounds to say "our home." The goods sent to brother Thomas had all found appropriate places in the cottage which we have named the Alcove from two large elms at either end forming an arch over the roof. Brother and sister had anticipated us and "set up the young couple in house-keeping," as they said, so when we arrived there was nothing for us to do but admire our pretty little home. I wished something had been left out of place, that I might have the opportunity of doing a little of the management myself. Even our supper had been prepared for us, and Kate comes every day to see that we are not in danger of starving.

Love in a cottage is very delightful in spite of the mishaps that sometimes occur. Paulina, there is one accomplishment, for such I deem it, which I do desire, and that is to prepare Clive's linen, for if there is one thing I wish more than another in domestic life, it is to have my husband dress neatly. You know I have had no experience in preparing men's linen for use, and my first attempts were complete failures. After shedding many tears, I succeeded in scorching Clive's linen so that it was fit only for the soiled linen basket, but he insisted on wearing it, though he buttoned tight his vest on a sultry July day, on the pretence of its being cold.

Clive's school has commenced, and after spending a week at home, his absence makes me lonesome. I watch at the gate for him and when he arrives we go to the yard together and sometimes, when no one is in sight, he carries me into the house.

I miss the dear friends at Glen Cottage and wish I could join

in your evening amusements, and sometimes I tease Clive to a game of romp, but I tell him he is like Sir Mastiff playing kitten.

We always remember all the beloved friends in our devotions.

Your affectionate

BIRDIE.

When Paul was with Alice, her calm trust in her Heavenly Father, her modesty and piety, her active benevolence, led him to renounce any skeptical views he might have entertained. The purity and unselfish motives that prompted her Christian efforts won his esteem, and the more he saw of her self-denials, the stronger became his desire for usefulness.

Alice renewed her appeals to his conscience with greater power than ever, as her influence was becoming greater every day. She noticed this and felt that she ought to use her power to win a gifted mind to yield to the truth.

"Alice," said he, "I never understood how useless has been my life, until I saw you, and if ever I do any good in the world I shall owe it to your heavenly influence."

"Do not give the honor to me, Paul, but to our Divine Master. If I have been the humble instrument of assisting you, I am truly grateful."

"You have, I hope, made me a better man, and you could make me the happiest one."

Alice was thoughtful, and after a silence of some minutes, said: —

"Paul, my friendship has strengthened as we have

become better acquainted, but would only a sisterly love satisfy you? And would you accept an engagement under these circumstances, if I have nothing more to offer?"

"Yes, decidedly."

"But, Paul, I do not expect to live long."

"Should you not, it would add to my happiness if I could call you mine only for a brief time. But you will not die soon, Alice. My heart tells me so. I cannot be separated from you," said Paul impetuously. "I am to leave you soon," he resumed, after walking across the room several times in great agitation. "O Alice, why will you not grant this favor to one who loves you so devotedly?"

"Paul, I have kept a secret from you I never intended to reveal, and which has influenced my decision. I once loved another."

"And do you still love him?"

"Only as a true and life-long friend."

"Then I will take a second place in your heart, if you will grant it to me."

"Think of it longer, and when we meet again, you shall have a decisive answer, unless you change your mind," said Alice.

Crawford was forced to accept the proposition, though he was sure there would be no change in his opinion. In the afternoon, he left by stage for his father's home which he had not visited since he returned from Europe.

From what Alice said, he was confirmed in the suspicions that had been awakened in his mind, when he first saw Alice and Clive meet, and was more confident of success, now that her first love was lost forever, while his regard for her increased for the noble spirit with which she had borne her disappointment.

Alice continued comfortable for some weeks, but as the autumn advanced she became weaker and had a slight cough. The Doctor watched these symptoms with anxiety, the usual remedies were applied but failed, and new ones were used with the same result. She was perfectly aware of her condition, but was calm, and even happy. She had contemplated death as inevitable, and quietly awaited its approach. Her friends became alarmed, but she tried to prepare them for the worst. Mrs. Howard was greatly afflicted at the prospect of losing so dear a friend, and visited her as often as she could leave her own family. The Doctor, to whom she seemed as his own child, spared no pains or expense to save her from death.

Though Alice grew weaker each day, yet to one unaccustomed to her disease, with the hectic on her cheeks, and the lustre in her eyes, she seemed in health, and some who called to see her thought she would recover. She took so little nourishment it was surprising what sustained her.

"Can't you take a little more nourishment, my dear?" often inquired Mrs. Clive.

"I would, Aunt Hattie, if I could, as you are so kind and take so much pains to prepare it. I wish I could please you."

Hannah, who believed Alice would recover if she would eat, tried her skill in preparing every delicacy she heard of.

"Now, darling, do eat this, it will do you good." It grieved Alice to refuse, as Hannah looked so disappointed.

Her mental powers never seemed so clear and discriminating, as when disease was wasting her physical strength.

She manifested an eager interest in all that pertained to her friends, and still administered to her patients, by the aid of others. She would send messages, flowers, and other gifts by any one who would undertake the mission, and enjoined upon her aunt to continue the work after her death, for which she tried to prepare herself, and she seemed to be at rest. When questioned in regard to Paul Crawford she replied, "I believe his devotion is sincere, and I would accept it if I could conscientiously, but it is impossible to regard him as I did Clive; besides, the pain of our separation would be more severe were we engaged."

Alice was confined to the house for several days, but contrary to the fears of the Doctor, she escaped the dreaded attack. Crawford was assiduous in his attentions, and, as soon as she was able to ride, took

her out every day. He declined the hospitalities of the Doctor, and boarded at the hotel, though after Alice was removed to her home he spent most of his time with her.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

LAND OF BEULAH.

"Higher, far upward, into the pure realm,
Over sun and star, thou must mount for love."

THE summer passed, and Alice appeared so much improved that her friends hoped she would regain her usual health. She received frequent letters from Clive and Fanny, cheerful and amusing, especially from the latter, when relating some of her housekeeping experiences. She wrote: —

"My fingers are bound in rags from cuts and burns, and Clive has to eat poor bread quite often, though he says it is very good, to please me. The steak is either overdone or nearly uncooked, and, O dear, I can never cook an egg just right. I am sometimes ready to cry with disappointment, but dear Clive is so kind and patient, so ready to excuse my mistakes, that I feel the more pity for him. How does Paulina perform her domestic duties so easily? Shall I ever equal her in these labors? Clive insists upon helping me, but sometimes I think that both of us together make the task worse. For instance, one morning he wished to cook the griddle cakes, and while I was arranging the table he neglected them, and when brought to the table one side was so burned they could not be eaten. He was greatly mortified, but I tenderly smoothed his forehead, when he laughed and said he thought he could better teach the 'Anabasis' than fry cakes. O Alice, he is the dearest and best husband in the world. We are so happy in our little cottage, we want you to come and visit us."

Alice had improved so much that she was able to call and see her patients in Paul's company. They had become disconsolate in her long absence, and when they saw her pleasant smile and heard her cheerful voice, they were delighted.

October came with its clear days and cool nights, and the green foliage had given place to the beautiful variegated hues of the New England autumn. The forests presented an array of brilliant tints, — orange, yellow, red, scarlet, and all shades of brown mingled together. Alice could see the hills she so greatly admired from the windows of her room, and often spoke of their splendor.

"What a beautiful world," she said, "my Heavenly Father has made; how glorious heaven must be." Her thoughts dwelt so much upon its celestial scenes that they were present to her mind in her dreams.

When Mrs. Howard came to her room one day, she inquired of her, "Do you believe in dreams?"

Mrs. Howard replied, "There may be some significance in them; sometimes, at least, they make impressions upon the mind, leading to important results."

"I had a delightful dream or vision one night," said Alice, "and it has been in my thoughts ever since. It was about heaven, and if the celestial abode is equal to my dream, I long to be there."

"Can you relate it?"

"My imperfect language is inadequate to convey a just idea of the scenes, but I will try to describe

them. I was in a strange place, where the beings and objects were unfamiliar, and the emotions and thoughts of which I was conscious were new and delightful beyond any ever known before. There was such a freedom from all suffering, such a sense of immortal vigor, such inexpressible happiness, such a feeling of completeness in everything, that I cannot describe it. While lost in amazement, an angel came to me saying he was my guardian, appointed at my birth to watch over me, and finally conduct me to the land of the Blessed. I have an instinctive consciousness that he comprehended me at once, and had ministered to my earthly comfort, and that he was to be my instructor in the future. My spirit, though it had left the body, still lingered on earth, to study for a time the wonders and beauties of our earthly habitation. I was endowed with such remarkable powers of motion, that I could pass from one part of our globe to another very quickly; besides, I possessed new senses that enabled me to perceive the latent properties of matter, when my guide explained to me what was too difficult for me to understand, both of the wonders of nature and the mysteries of my own life. During our progress over this planet we saw other spirits with their guides, some about leaving their earthly homes. When I inquired why the saints did not immediately enter heaven after death, my guide replied that some preparation of the mental powers was needed before they could appreciate the glories of the heavenly world. I then

inquired whether the saints ever returned to the earth after leaving it. He replied, 'They sometimes return to the friends they have left.' 'Heaven,' said the guide, 'is a place remote from earth, and in our progress thither, we shall have a view of innumerable worlds, an investigation of which will form a part of your future studies. The abode of the righteous constitutes the centre of all other systems; it is of vast magnitude and combines the glories of all others.'

"As I listened to his descriptions," said Alice, "I felt a desire to enter, when my wish was gratified by my angelic guide. As we reached the celestial abode, we were welcomed by myriads of holy beings, some of them seen for the first time, others recognized as acquaintances on earth, and among the latter was the spirit of my dear mother, the first to greet my coming. How surpassingly beautiful the saints appeared. There were no signs of weariness or suffering, but all possessed immortal vigor. Though different in mind and appearance, there was perfect harmony. All were governed by the same law, that of perfect love. There were also diversities of tastes and the means of gratifying them were infinite. With this heavenly company, and above them all in glory, was the Redeemer, and towards Him all eyes were directed, and before Him all bowed. Angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, with all other orders of celestial beings, joined in celebrating the praises of the Lamb slain. The scenery of heaven

was infinitely diversified, so that the inhabitants found new subjects of study constantly. There were scenes of the grand and sublime, beautiful flowers of fadeless beauty and delicious fragrance, the river of life proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb, on whose banks grew stately trees, with leaves possessing medicinal qualities. None were idle; all were employed differently, according to their capacities and inclinations. Some were conversing on the mysteries of creation, others on those of redemption, while some of the older saints were instructing infant minds that have passed from earth before they felt the blight of sin. In the central part of heaven stood the celestial city, the New Jerusalem, with its walls of precious stones, and gates of pearl, rendering it an object of intense interest to all. This remarkable city surpassed in beauty and magnificence everything the imagination could conceive or language could describe. Vast companies of the heavenly host were ascending and descending the steps to the city. Others were walking its beautiful streets, some were entering its pearly gates, while others were on its battlements.

"My guide conducted me through one of its lofty portals, when a scene of inexpressible glory was witnessed. No language can convey a complete idea of its radiant beauty. It streets were paved with burnished gold; spacious mansions were fitted with royal magnificence for the saints.

"On the Hill of Zion, stood the Temple of Jehovah, containing the thrones of God and of the Lamb, and towards this Temple all the heavenly host directed their steps when the angel sounded the trumpet, calling the faithful to join in the praise of Him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb slain. In the midst, stood the eternal throne of the Divine Being composed of uncreated light, sending streams of living radiance through the universe, while enclosed by clouds of inexpressible glory and majesty was the Supreme, Infinite, Incorporeal Father of all.

"The Son, allied both to God and man by his twofold nature, was the Medium of communication between the Creator and his creatures. His mien was majestic and condescending, His countenance expressed ineffable love, His eyes were softened by tenderness, while among that vast assembly, He was peerless.

"Every eye was directed towards the throne, waiting the signal for universal homage to be paid, when it became enveloped in a cloud of glory too radiant for the sight of mortals, and the angelic host covered their faces with their wings and all the saints fell prostrate and cast their golden crowns at the feet of Him who had redeemed them by His blood, joining in ascription of praise to God; and so great was the multitude of heavenly worshippers, that their voices were like the roar of the sea and the peal of thunder.

"The act of worship finished, one of the angelic

band took the lyre and led the company in song, when all joined with harp and voice in celebrating the praise of God and the Lamb, until all heaven was filled with divine harmony.

"My heart," said Alice, "beat with rapture when I asked my guide whether I might join in the song. He replied, 'Not yet; you must return to the earth for a short time, but soon you will be admitted to remain forever.' With the heavenly music still sounding, and my inexpressible joy still felt, I awoke to a consciousness of my presence here, but I feel assured I shall soon join the company of the redeemed, which I long to do."

"Your dream, Alice, was very remarkable and delightful," said Mrs. Howard. "It is not often permitted to mortal beings to have such glimpses of the heavenly world, even in dreams."

"I can account for my vision," said Alice, "partially, at least. I had been thinking of the subject until my ideal heaven became real, and I dreamed much as my imagination had pictured it."

Mrs. Howard and Alice cherished similar views, and had frequent interesting conversations on the subject, by which they had their faith strengthened, one to "tread the verge of Jordan," the other to bear the burdens of life with Christian resignation until her summons should come to cross to the other shore.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE TRANSLATION.

"In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led."

It was the Doctor's opinion that Alice would not live through the month, and thought Clive should be informed of his belief. Mrs. Howard wrote to him and to Crawford about the Doctor's judgment. The result was that Paul came the next day, and Clive, with Fanny, a few days after. Alice, not knowing that letters had been sent, was surprised to see her friends, but was pleased, as she had not expected to see them again on earth. She had made known her feelings and wishes to Mrs. Howard in regard to her affairs, even her relations with Paul, and had sought the advice of her friend in regard to the subject. He believed that she would recover, but she did not know how he would feel now that he must give up all hope. At her request, Mrs. Howard asked Paul if he desired to see her alone. The reply was decidedly, "Yes."

Alice was sitting at a window, looking much as she did a few weeks before, though too weak to rise. Paul was agitated on meeting her, but her calmness restored his composure. He believed for the moment that she might recover, but it was only for a short

time, as he took her hand which she extended to him. His hope fled and he could not speak, when he saw her hand, so thin and colorless.

Alice was the first to break the silence. She said, "You remember what was said at our last interview, Paul?"

"Perfectly; how could I forget it?"

'You have had time to think of it."

"Yes, my mind is unchanged," replied Paul.

"Is it the same in the prospect of my immediate death?"

"I again renew my earnest request, that you will accept my offer though we may be united only for a brief period. It will be a solace when you are gone, to feel that I could call you mine if only for one day."

Alice was greatly affected and her tears fell fast, but after a moment's pause she extended her hand saying that she would love him with all the devotion of which she was capable, but she felt it was too small for such constancy as his. This was the happiest and the saddest day of Paul Crawford's life. He had come into possession of what he most desired, only to have his treasure suddenly snatched away. It was to him one of the most mysterious events of Divine Providence, which greatly tried his faith, but to the Infinite One it was the important link in the chain of events that would lead him to a self-denying, useful life in the future.

As soon as Clive and Fanny arrived, the latter went

to Alice directly and fell into her arms weeping, while Clive stood by in silent grief.

"Come here, Clive," said Alice, joining his hand to Fanny's. "Receive my last wish for your happiness, my dear friends."

"O Alice, how can we part with you?" said Clive. "You have always been a dear friend to me, but I never prized you so highly as now when you are about to leave us."

"I shall not be lost to you," said Alice, smiling. "Perhaps I can serve you better there," pointing upwards. "Will you move me to my favorite window, Paul? I want to take one more view of earth before I depart."

He raised her in his arms and placed her in a chair near the window overlooking the garden and commanding the hills beyond. She gazed at the scene for some time intently as if she knew it was her last view of earth. There were some late flowers in bloom, and as she saw them she said: —

"Paul, will you select a bouquet as my last gift to Aunt Hetty?" Then raising her eyes to the hills in the brightness of an autumnal New England day, said, "This is very lovely; I could remain here many years if it was my Heavenly Father's will, as I have much to live for; but I am willing to go when He calls me. Clive, I have one request to make, and that is, to go for Mrs. Howard, as I desire to have her with me."

"I will go directly," for he saw that her departure was near.

It was the instinctive longing of her mind to have her dearest friend, upon whom she had relied, near in her last moments.

Mrs. Howard soon came, and found Alice sinking, though her mind was clear.

"I am so glad to see you. You will remain with me, will you not?"

"Certainly, as long as you need me."

"I wish to see Paul once more."

When he came she said, "Paul, will you resume my work, and carry it on?" meaning that of visiting and assisting the sick and afflicted.

"Yes, my dear Alice, in my poor way, I promise, heaven being my witness." Their hands were clasped in a last embrace, and he left her presence a different man.

Henceforth he seemed to live in a different world.

All the friends left the room except Mrs. Howard, that the invalid might rest, when she fell into a gentle slumber while her friend supported her head. After an interval of half an hour, she awoke and said:—

"It was so beautiful."

"What, my dear?"

"My dream. Let me rest my head on your bosom; it is so comforting."

In a few moments her countenance shone with unearthly delight, and joining her hands, she looked

up with a smile of recognition. "Mother," she whispered, and her spirit was released.

She had selected her place of burial, in a quiet spot shaded by the branches of an elm, her favorite place of resort. None knew her but to love, and her early loss was mourned by all her acquaintances, while there was one who bore his grief through his whole life — Paul Crawford.

After her burial, Mrs. Howard told Clive and Fanny the secret Alice had confided to her, which both surprised and distressed them. Her patient suffering and generous spirit awakened their love and sympathy, and they never spoke of her but with peculiar tenderness.

"O Clive," said Fanny, "that I should have been the cause of her sorrow. I never suspected it."

"No, Birdie, it was no fault of yours. Had I known the strength and character of her love before I saw you, our destiny might have been very different, but an overruling Providence ordered it otherwise. Had Alice lived, she might have been the happy companion of Paul Crawford who was devotedly attached to her."

"O my dear, do not speak lightly of her sorrow," said Fanny.

"You misunderstood me," replied Clive. "I could never speak irreverently of one for whom I cherished so sincere an affection, as a brother for a sister. It was her nature to love, and Paul is capable of awakening such an emotion."

"We now see why she refused his offer, which she could not accept until she had brought her mind to relinquish her first love," said Fanny.

"How I pity Crawford. How would you have felt had you been in his place?" remarked Fanny.

"There is no occasion for anxiety. You are not going to leave me, I trust?" said Clive, thinking it best to drop the subject.

The death of Alice decided Paul's future career, and he at once began to prepare himself for his work. Having once decided upon a question, no argument or persuasion could turn him from his purpose. He entered a theological seminary with the view of preparing for the ministry, a plan which his father opposed, but his mother approved. The father preferred to have his son seek some other profession, or even some secular business, and he would give him every advantage in his power, but Paul was inflexible, and the wealthy capitalist was compelled to allow his son to enter a field of labor that in his estimation offered no facilities for acquiring wealth or fame.

Paul Crawford devoted himself assiduously to his calling, and during his preparatory studies spent his leisure time in seeking objects of charity for the purpose of relieving them, a work his fastidious tastes would once have led him to avoid.

During the remainder of his life, he was accustomed to visit the grave of Alice and renew his promise made to her. After due preparation he entered upon

his sacred calling, and his talents and agreeable manners soon gained for him general admiration. Popular churches endeavored to secure his services, but he refused all such invitations and devoted his time and energies to the poor and neglected wherever they might be found. His father died soon after he finished his studies, when he came into possession of great wealth, so he could devote his time wholly to benevolent work. He selected, as his field of labor, the vicinity of a large city, as more destitute persons are found in such localities than in country places, but he never forgot the beneficiaries of Alice as long as they needed assistance. He felt special interest in Mrs. Howard's family, because Alice had loved them so ardently, and he manifested his regard in various delicate ways, sometimes in the form of valuable presents, "for the sake of a mutual friend gone hence," as he expressed it, and in later years by soliciting the privilege of assuming the expense of Lillie's education. He remained the devoted friend of Clive and Fanny, whose modest dwelling was always ready to welcome him whose friendship they highly prized. Paul never married, but he found a solace for his lonely hours in the lovely children who were the delight of Glen Cottage.

Did Alice ever know what a blessing her pure character and early death had been to the world? Perhaps she did; and if so, she no doubt rejoiced that her short life had not been in vain.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CHANGES.

"And love; earth's love; and can we love
Fixedly when all things move?"

It was late in autumn, and Mrs. Howard was looking forward to a long and lonesome winter. Fanny's absence and the death of Alice left her quite alone with her little family, and besides, the demands upon her strength and sympathy for the last two years had impaired her health and depressed her spirits. A change of scene became indispensable, but she could not see how it could be effected with all her family responsibilities. In a few days the question was settled for her quite unexpectedly. Crawford arrived directly from Clermont, bearing a message from Clive and Fanny, asking that Anna might come and spend the winter with them. The next day her brother Thomas came on business about her affairs, and with his practical mind suggested what ought to be done.

"Paulina," said he in his abrupt manner, "you must n't stay here alone through the winter. Pack your trunks, and go home with me."

At first she did not see how it could be done. She had not only her own children to care for, but there

was Lucy Clive, whose father expected her education to continue under her direction.

"I will manage that," said her brother. "I'm going to the village and will call upon the Doctor."

Nothing was said in opposition, as it was useless when Mr. Sherwood decided on a course of action, therefore his team drove up to the door in a few minutes. "Come, Paulina, put on your bonnet and ride to the village with me, for I want you present at our consultation that you may not complain afterwards."

"Brother, I always was obliged to yield to you, and I see you intend I shall continue to do so, but you have been so kind a brother, I yield cheerfully."

"That shows your good sense," he replied, raising Willie in his arms. "Here's a young man who's got some of his uncle's grit, if I'm not mistaken; guess you'll have to yield to him one of these days, or you'll have some battles."

Dr. Clive agreed with Mr. Sherwood about Mrs. Howard's need of rest and change, and gave his professional advice about it. He then proposed a plan he had arranged, which was that Mrs. Howard should leave the Cottage and come to the village to live. He had a pretty little tenement near his own residence, which would be just what she needed, and there were several families in the village who would be pleased to place their children under her instruction. The Doctor would like to have Lucy at home

a few months, to become acquainted with her new mother.

Mr. Sherwood approved of this plan, unless his sister wished to remain with him; but she decided to go home with him and spend the winter, then in the spring try the Doctor's arrangement. Anna would go to Clermont in company with Mr. Crawford, while her mother would take the two younger children with her.

In the course of a week, with the assistance of some of the neighbors, everything was arranged, and the Howards left Glen Cottage, never to return as a family. Mrs. Howard had passed many happy and some sorrowful days under its roof, and the place had become sacred to her from its associations. Here she had loved and suffered, and she could not leave it without tearful regret.

After several years it became the home of the eldest child, when she again visited her favorite resorts, but under quite different circumstances. Anna was pleased with the idea of going to see "Aunt Fanny," but when the time for separation came, it was more difficult to part with her friends than she supposed. The next day after she went, Mrs. Howard, with her younger children, left Glen Cottage with her brother. The Waltons had come to bid her good-bye, the two families having lived several years on intimate terms; both regretted a separation. Arthur was almost inconsolable, as he had spent many pleasant days at

the Cottage with the children, both at their lessons and in their sports.

Anna was a little homesick during the first week of her visit, but Clive and Fanny exerted themselves to please her, when she became reconciled. For the first time, she attended school and was the youngest of Mr. Layton's pupils, and soon became a favorite with the others, yet she was so modest and unconscious of her abilities, that she was never envied by the other scholars. Fanny soon learned her capacity of becoming a valuable help in her domestic cares, as her experience in her mother's household duties enabled her to render great assistance to her aunt. Her quiet, well-bred manners pleased her Uncle Thomas Sherwood so well, that she was always welcome to his office, however busy he might be, for she never disturbed him. She always behaved with so much propriety at table, in the parlor, and in the presence of company, that he frequently mentioned her as an example to his own children.

"Anna is a girl," said Charles, a boy twelve years old. "If I made no more noise than she does the fellows would call me a 'girl-boy,'" and he turned scornfully on his heels at the idea of being like a girl.

Anna had been taught to write, therefore she corresponded with her mother quite frequently. After three weeks' absence she sent her first letter: —

My dear Mamma, — I am happy now at Aunt Fanny's. I used to cry after I went to bed, because I wanted to see you and kiss you, Lillie, and little brother. I did n't like to go to school at first. I was afraid of the large boys and girls, but they are very kind to me now; also Uncle Clive and Aunt Fanny are very good to me. Oh, we have such nice times after Uncle comes home from school. We have games in the evening, and I laugh to see him play "Blind Man's Buff." His arms are so long he can reach us, and sometimes he catches Aunt Fanny and calls her Anna. When he seizes us he takes us in his arms and kisses us. After we get through playing we are all tired, then Uncle Clive takes Aunt Fanny on one knee and me on the other, and rocks us, calling us his pets. Sometimes Aunt Fanny sings and Uncle Clive plays on his flute, and afterwards he reads to us or tells us stories.

I should be so happy if you were here, my darling mamma. Uncle Thomas and Aunt Celia are very good to me, but cousin Charles teases me sometimes. He is n't like Henry. I like cousin Ned better. A hundred kisses for you, Lillie, and Willie. I forgot to tell you Aunty corrected the mistakes.

A dear good-bye,

Anna.

The winter passed quickly and pleasantly, so differently from what Mrs. Howard feared. Her mother was in feeble health, and Paulina thought it might be their last meeting, which proved to be the case. As soon as the travelling was suitable, she left for her home, intending to visit her friends at Clermont on her way, and take Anna with her. She spent a week with them, and was much pleased to find the young couple so pleasantly and happily settled in their new home. She saw Fanny, the child-like maiden and

blooming bride, maturing into the graceful woman, presiding with dignity over her own household.

"Paulina, I owe so much to your instruction, patience, and example in preparing me for my position, that I cannot express my gratitude in words. If I succeed in my efforts to make our home pleasant, the credit belongs to you."

"In seeing you happy it adds to my joy, Birdie, and so I receive back more than I gave," said Mrs. Howard, kissing her.

"Clive is so gentle, patient, and appreciative of everything I do, I am more than rewarded for all my efforts," said Fanny.

Mrs. Howard thought of her own happy days, but was silent.

On returning to Jefferson she found a home prepared for her with everything in order to begin housekeeping. This unexpected pleasure she owed to the Waltons and Dr. Clive. When she expressed her gratitude with deep emotion for such thoughtful consideration, the Doctor replied it was all selfishness on his part, for he had become tired of looking after his "wild romp," and longed for her to return and relieve him.

In a few weeks Mrs. Howard was ready to resume her duties as teacher. Her change of residence had relieved her of many domestic cares, for Lucy lived at her own home and came only as a day scholar. Mrs. Howard had more applicants for pupils than she

could accommodate. She intended to keep her class small at first and then increase it if she found her plan successful. Her method of teaching was quite different from that generally pursued at that time, and was somewhat similar to that of Mr. Layton's, and was successful in gaining the attention of the pupils and the approval of the parents. She taught less from books and more from nature, though she did not go to the extreme of discarding books altogether, but combined the two methods. Under her leadership the pupils advanced surely if not so rapidly. Her first aim was to lay a good foundation for character, hence moral instruction was always blended with intellectual, yet her pupils never felt they were being disciplined in morals.

In the early training of children, she believed the pupil should be brought into communication with nature as much as possible. This had been her method with her own children, and she believed it could be adopted with others, at least with a limited number. Mrs. Howard possessed good facilities for bringing the minds of her pupils in contact with the world of matter. There were objects all about them, from which profitable lessons might be learned, while Dr. Clive offered her the use of his cabinet of foreign and native specimens, as well as his library. Mr. Goodell, whose little daughter Grace became one of her pupils, made the same offer.

Anna thought Willie was old enough to begin to

read, and, unless he was soon taught, he would become a dunce, therefore she undertook to teach him his letters, but the poor teacher was sorely troubled by his boyish ways. He was far more interested in a whip, a spade, or a hammer and nails, than in the mysterious little curves and angles, called letters.

"Now, Willie, what is that?" said Anna as she pointed to the first letter of the alphabet. Astride a stick, with whip in hand, he looked at the letter which had been told him a dozen times, with one eye, then with the other, and bringing his head closer to the book, he examined it with both eyes, but was non-committal.

"What is it?" inquired his teacher. Willie looked very wise, but did not choose to tell.

"Say A," urged his instructor.

"Say A," was the reply, and her pupil galloped off on his hobby-horse.

Anna, ready to cry with vexation, stood waiting to make another attempt when he had performed his journey around the room.

"What is the letter, Willie?"

The little fellow was greatly perplexed, for he had forgotten the lesson repeated a dozen times or more. Still his sister urged him to give an answer, as Willie's horse became restive and needed curbing, when he became obstinate and the whip must be used.

"Willie, why don't you tell?"

The horse reared and plunged, when both horse and

rider were cornered; and finding no way of escape, the child told his persistent teacher the letter was O. A similar experience Anna's young kitten had once given her when she was instructing it in the mysteries of the alphabet.

Mrs. Howard found that the management of Willie was far more difficult than that of her daughters. He was more restless and unyielding, more persistent in having his own way.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

A NEW EXPERIENCE.

"A babe in a house is a well-spring of pleasure,
A messenger of peace and love."

ONE morning Lucy came running in breathless haste to Mrs. Howard's, saying, "Anna, I've got a little brother. Hannah showed me a tiny baby wrapped in a blanket, and said it was my brother. He is n't so large as Willie, but Hannah says he will be, one of these days," and the child danced about the room in great joy.

"I've got a new cousin," said Lillie.

"Oh, you have n't either."

"Yes, she has," said Anna. "Mamma had a letter from Uncle Clive, and Aunt Fanny has a little girl baby, and it is our cousin."

"Pooh! your cousin is only a girl, and I have got a boy brother," said Lucy contemptuously.

"Did you ever hear of a girl brother?" inquired Anna, piqued at the slight upon her new cousin.

"I don't care; they call Jimmy Carter a girl-boy because he plays so much with girls. My brother is a real boy," and off she darted to proclaim the news to all her village mates.

A few weeks after the news from Clive and Fanny, the latter wrote to her sister as follows:—

MY DEAR PAULINA, — My heart is so full of tumultuous joy, I cannot find words to express it. As I write, beside me is my precious babe asleep, with her tiny fingers closed and the long lashes shading her soft eyes, with her little mouth ready to be kissed.

Sister, I never dreamed that the little, unconscious stranger would unseal such a fountain of maternal love in my heart I thought before, I could never love another as I loved my husband, but I find this little babe has awakened a new and different feeling, while instead of weakening my love for Clive, it has strengthened it.

When he comes home, if baby is asleep, we go and stand by her cradle and watch her slumbers. We want her in our sight all the time, and constantly fear lest some harm should befall her. Do all young parents feel thus, or is *our* baby more to us than others are to their parents? We have named her Alice Bradford. Clive wrote to Paul to know whether it would be agreeable to him to have her called for the dear departed one, and he returned answer that it would be pleasing to him. Clive says he hopes baby will resemble her mother, while I wish she may be like her father.

Excuse me for writing so much about ourselves, but our hearts are too full of a new joy and love to keep silence. We thank our Heavenly Father for this precious gift and seek His guidance in performing our parental duties faithfully. Clive has given her the pet name of "Rose Bud." I try to recall your methods of managing children but feel that I know nothing about it. Do advise me, dear Paulina, about my new duties, as you have in so many others.

Your loving FANNY.

The change in Paul Crawford's life surprised his acquaintances, who were ignorant of the causes that led to it, and some of his gay companions treated his

plan of studying for the ministry with ridicule, and considered his talents had been buried. He had been very popular among his classmates. His easy and genial manners and indiscriminate generosity made him a universal favorite, therefore they were not well pleased with the idea of losing one of their "boon companions." But neither the fear of ridicule nor the scorn or neglect of his acquaintances could divert him from his purpose. Soon after leaving the Seminary he selected a beautiful suburban home, where his mother, a pious and refined lady, presided over his house, while he devoted himself to benevolent work among the poor and neglected classes. His fortune and taste were exhibited in the elegance and comfort of his home, while his attractive and hospitable manners won a large circle of friends, but he never allowed the advantages of his social position to interfere with his professional duties.

Often when surrounded by genial friends engaged in entertaining conversation, he would ask to be excused that he might call upon some poor invalid, look after the tempted youth, or visit some prisoner's cell. He had overcome his natural aversion to being brought in contact with squalor and crime, and was in sympathy as well as in act the friend of the despised outcast. He conscientiously kept his solemn pledge made to his lost friend.

As Lillie grew older, she exhibited traits of character quite unlike those of her sister. Anna had always

rendered unquestioning obedience to her mother, and whatever she required of her child, Anna thought was right, but Lillie was disposed to require a reason for certain things expected of her, especially if repugnant to her feelings or opposed to her will.

'Why must I do it, mother?" she would say, and then argue the question with great pertinacity.

"Mamma, must I always obey you if I don't want to?" she inquired on one occasion, when she was not more than four years old.

"Certainly you must."

"You do not mind me, mamma."

"Our Heavenly Father said that children should obey their parents, but did not say that parents should mind their children. You are my child, and should love and obey me. Don't you love me, Lillie?" This was one of Mrs. Howard's strongest arguments, an appeal to the child's affection for her, which was very ardent.

"Yes, mamma," throwing her arms about her mother's neck and fondly caressing her, "but I should like to do as I want to, sometimes."

"Who do you suppose knows best, Lillie or her mother?"

"I suppose you do, mamma."

"Do you think it right to disobey God?"

One time Mrs. Howard sent to a neighboring town to purchase some goods for Anna's dress, without thinking that Lillie would have any feeling about it.

While the package was opened and the article much admired, Lillie stood by wondering what her mother had purchased for her, but when she discovered there was nothing for her, she felt deeply grieved and disappointed. She did not utter a word, but retired to her room, and expressed her wounded feelings in tears. When the time for supper came she did not make her appearance, and when sought for was found in great distress. No persuasion could induce her to eat, and she retired to rest sobbing herself to sleep. She suffered a long time in spite of the efforts of her mother to soothe her feelings. Mrs. Howard deeply regretted the pain her thoughtless act had caused, especially as the child betrayed no feelings of anger or envy.

When Lillie was very young, she manifested a decided preference for play, to the neglect of her books, but as she grew older her taste for acquiring knowledge began to develop. She loved it for its own sake, and never seemed so happy as when in its pursuit. Her admiration for nature became a strong passion, and hours were spent each day in those pursuits which brought her into communion with the Creator's works, sometimes with others but often alone. The child seemed to live in a world of her own, but when the time for study was over she seemed the most lively and joyful of all her associates. If there was one trait more than another that marked her character, it was a love for her little brother.

Though he returned her affection as far as his coarser and more selfish nature could, yet like most brothers he was sometimes wayward and impatient of restraint, and unwilling to be guided by the authority or influence of others, and Lillie's affection and watchfulness sometimes annoyed him, when he would rudely repel her. She did not resent it from him as she would have done from others, but she felt it keenly. Her tears, however, were a restraint, as he could never resist these, even when all other influences failed. Lillie had been his playmate and confidant from his earliest recollection, and to her he went for aid in his studies when old enough to attend school, and with her assistance and encouragement he attained to a respectable position in his class, though not fond of books or study.

Several years had passed since the events recorded at the beginning of this story, and Mrs. Howard's family as well as others, had changed. Anna had grown to be a young lady; Lillie was fifteen, and Willie had become a robust lad, full of boyish mischief, and fast developing his masculine tendencies,—especially that of asserting his independence.

Henry Walton had attained to full manhood, and developed many noble qualities. His early interest in little Anna Howard had become an ardent attachment, and with the mother's permission, after a proper time, she became the mistress of Glen Cottage, the Howard farm having come into possession of Henry

Walton. His brother John had, a few years before, married Matilda Baldwin, and the young couple lived with "father and mother Walton," and Aunt Jenny, in the course of time, surrendered her household duties to younger hands.

Arthur had manifested an inclination for study, and Dr. Clive, from gratitude to him for saving the life of his daughter when they were children, offered to pay his expenses at college.

Arthur and Lucy were again brought into friendship with each other, and though for a time they continued their childish sports and quarrels, a new life dawned upon them in a more intimate companionship.

Mrs. Howard felt it was best to accept her brother's invitation, which had been renewed every year, as her mother had passed away, and she was more free to accept his hospitalities. Willie required the watchful care of his uncle and guardian, and Lillie, needing better advantages for study, was sent to her Uncle Clive's academy. Lucy had spent a year at a fashionable boarding school, but her father was not satisfied with her progress, nor the influences to which she had been subjected, therefore he decided to place her under the instruction of Mr. Layton. As she was to become a member of his family, with Lillie Howard, the arrangement was entirely satisfactory to the Doctor.

Mrs. Howard left Jefferson with regret and the good wishes of her acquaintances. The separation of

her family had been anticipated with sorrow, and now that the time had come it was even more trying than she expected.

Perhaps a brief notice of some of the characters of the story may be expected. Mr Merill, until age compelled him to resign, continued his business, when he transferred it to his eldest son, whose reckless habits soon squandered a large part of the property his father had acquired.

The McClures managed to struggle on in their usual manner, except "Curly Jack," who, at fourteen years of age, left his home without his parents' knowledge, and went to sea, rose to the position of the master of a fine ship, and made a fortune in eastern trade. The Baldwins, Cutlers, and Whitemans intermarried and settled, some in Jefferson, while others moved to the West where they became prosperous farmers. The Pages struggled on, but became no more prosperous until their children settled, some in one place, and some in another, in their native State, with the exception of the "Marquis" whose love of quarrel and restless spirit found relief, first in the village politics, and then in a more extended sphere, until he gained a seat in the Legislature of his native State; but not satisfied with so limited a field of labor, as soon as California was open to adventurers, he went there where he found a suitable arena for his talents, and soon rose to considerable eminence as a statesman.

Deacon Hayford and wife, and Aunt Hetty followed their departed friends, not long after, while Dan Woodard, falling into Mr. Merill's hands, was removed from one place to another, until he became dissatisfied and left town with all his goods and chattels, blind horse and all, for regions unknown to the people of the town. Marvellous Chapin and his wife Prudy, strange to say, did ride "in the railroad," to Ohio, where their son resided, but, as they never returned, the people of Jefferson were never entertained with an account of that adventure.

Mrs. Howard, after "Sowing" the seeds of a healthful training of her interesting family, and patiently "Waiting" for the result, was permitted to reap a rich harvest by seeing her children following her footsteps, and becoming useful members of society.

THE END.

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